DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 434 193 UD 033 124

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE | Promoting Educational Success Forty-Five Years after "Brown." Special Issue on Education. |
| INSTITUTION | Southern Regional Council, Atlanta, GA. |
| ISSN | ISSN-1093-2446 |
| PUB DATE | 1999-00-00 |
| NOTE | 37p. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | Southern Regional Council, 133 Carnegie Way, Suite 900, Atlanta, GA 30303-1024. Tel: 404-522-8764; Fax: 404-522-8791; Web site: <http://www.southerncouncil.org>. |
| PUB TYPE | Collected Works - Serials (022) |
| JOURNAL CIT | Southern Changes; v21 n1 Spr 1999 |
| EDRS PRICE | EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Access to Education; Compensatory Education; *Desegregation Litigation; Educational Change; Educational History; Educational Vouchers; Elementary Secondary Education; *Equal Education; *School Desegregation; *Track System (Education) |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Brown v Board of Education |

ABSTRACT

Forty-five years after the "Brown v. Board of Education" decision, the United States still faces the realities of institutional resistance to change. This special issue reviews the past decade of work by the Southern Regional Council to overcome inequality in education in the context of that organization's long struggle. Selections explore past accomplishments and present needs. The following articles are included: (1) "Reshaping Education Forty-Five Years after "Brown" (Wendy S. Johnson); (2) "Lessons Learned: A Decade of Education Reform" (Sarah Ellen Torian); (3) "Tracking Hurts Children" (Maria Klenbort); (4) "The Right Attacks Public Schools" (Barbara Miner); (5) "Promote Educational Success" (Gregory Malhoit); (6) "Voucher Push Moves South" (Ellen Spears); (7) "Education Is Key to Eliminating Racial Inequality" (Southern Regional Council); (8) "Schools In Conflict" (Leslie Dunbar); (9) "Title I Reauthorization" (Diane Piche); (10) "Standards Reform" (M. Hayes Mizell); (11) "Completing the Circle, Part II"; and (12) "Grace and Guts: Virginia Foster Durr, 1903-1999." (SLD)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED 434 193

# SOUTHERN CHANGES

SPRING
1999

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL • ATLANTA • Volume 21, Number 1

S. Suitts

2A

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

## Special Issue on Education

## *Promoting Educational Success Forty-Five Years after* Brown

UD033424

2 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# SOUTHERN CHANGES

**Volume 21, Number 1 • Spring 1999**

**Editor:** Allen Tullos
**Managing Editor:** Ellen Spears
**Contributing Editors:** Julian Bond, Elaine Davenport, Paul Gaston, Denise Giardina, Stetson Kennedy, Tom Rankin, H. Randall Williams
**Editorial Assistance:** Sherry Barnett, Robyn Davis, David Dreger, Mekonnen Gessesse, Barry E. Lee, Sarah E. Torian
**Composition:** Barry E. Lee

**Publisher:** Wendy S. Johnson

**Advertising and Circulation:** David Dreger

**Editorial and Business Office:** Southern Regional Council, 133 Carnegie Way, Suite 900, Atlanta, GA 30303-1024; (404) 522-8764, (404) 522-8791 fax


**Copyright** © 1999 by the Southern Regional Council, Inc. All rights reserved. No reproduction without written permission. Third class postage paid in Montgomery, Alabama.


**Editorial Policy:** *Southern Changes* is a forum of ideas and opinions on the issues and events of the South; the material in this journal does not necessarily represent the views of the Council. *Southern Changes* welcomes writers' queries and manuscripts, and readers' letters.
**Subscriptions:** ISSN 0193-2446. Four issues are published each year and sent to members and associate members of the Council. Associate membership is $30 annually for individuals, $75 for institutions, and includes invitations to SRC conferences, the Council's specialized newsletters, and discounts on other SRC publications. See order form in this issue. *Southern Changes* is available on microfilm from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

*Southern Changes* is published by the Southern Regional Council, Inc., a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization which seeks to promote racial justice, protect democratic rights, and broaden civic participation in the Southern United States.


*Cover photo by Rob Amberg. A volunteer tutors an elementary school student at an after-school program for inner-city youth in Albany, Georgia.*

**Visit our web site at http://www.southerncouncil.org**


Southern Regional Council

President: Jean Chalmers, Gainesville, Fla.
Vice President: Charles S. Johnson, Atlanta, Ga.
Executive Director: Wendy Johnson, Atlanta, Ga.
Secretary: Keller Barron, Columbia, S.C.
Treasurer: Cleophus Thomas, Anniston, Ala.


# In this Issue


**Reshaping Education Forty-Five Years After *Brown*** ..... 3
*Wendy S. Johnson*

**Lessons Learned: A Decade of Education Reform** ..... 4
Sarah Ellen Torian highlights the ingredients of successful school reform as learned by the SRC and the parents, educators, and community members it supports.

**Tracking Hurts Children** ..... 14
*Marcia Klenbort*

**The Right Attacks Public Schools** ..... 15
Barbara Miner examines the cohesion and friction among religious and economic conservatives and their agenda for public schools.

**Promote Educational Success** ..... 18
*Gregory Malhoit*

**Voucher Push Moves South** ..... 19
*Ellen Spears*

**Education Is Key to Eliminating Racial Inequality** ..... 20
An excerpt from the SRC's racial attitudes survey.

**Schools in Conflict** ..... 22
Former SRC Executive Director Leslie Dunbar chronicles the Council's role in the desegregation of public schools in the South.
*Leslie Dunbar*

**Title I Reauthorization** ..... 24
*Dianne Piché*

**Standards Reform** ..... 27
*M. Hayes Mizell*

**Completing the Circle, Part II** ..... 29
Tapes and CDs of *Will the Circle Be Unbroken?* to be available soon.

**Grace and Guts: Virginia Foster Durr 1903 - 1999** ..... 35

# Reshaping Education Forty-Five Years After *Brown*

**By Wendy S. Johnson**

An SRC survey on racial attitudes found sixty percent of Americans rank improving schools and education as a top priority over any other issue. The reasons are many. Education is the foundation for a decent job and livelihood and central to almost every other measure of a society's well-being.

Yet, as education improves in the South, inequalities within the educational system persist. Forty-five years after *Brown* began to break through barriers to educational participation, we confront the realities of institutional resistance to change.

The Washington, D.C.-based Education Trust reports that while tremendous progress was made toward closing the gap in reading scores between white and African-American and Latino students during the two decades leading up to 1989, today the reverse is true. During the 1970s and 1980s, the gap in achievement between African-American and white students, as measured by reading scores, narrowed by about half, while the gap between Latino and white students narrowed by about one-third. Beginning in the late 80s, with some exceptions, that gap has begun to widen. In math, "while almost all groups are gaining, the gains among white students outpace gains among African Americans and Latinos," the Education Trust reported.

In this issue of *Southern Changes*, we review the past decade of SRC's work to overcome inequality in education in the context of its long history of involvement in the struggle to end unequal education. A glimpse of that long view is provided by former SRC Executive Director Leslie Dunbar (1961-1965) in "Schools in Conflict." Sarah Ellen Torian chronicles the key ingredients in SRC's current education strategy: building partnerships and nourishing peer leadership development for systemic school reform; valuing all students' learning styles; and setting high expectations for all learners.

We also hear from a host of Southern education reformers at work in various capacities in local places in the South: Dr. Lisa Delpit and Gwen Williams training teachers in Atlanta; Clarie White providing support to families in Fayetteville, North Carolina; Robert Woodruff in Hollandale and Robert Markham in Meridian, Mississippi, providing leadership as principals; Shirley Martin coordinating volunteer tutors in Monticello, Arkansas; Anne Cooper working from the school board in Athens/Clarke County, Georgia; and Karen Watson leading concerned citizens against racial barriers in Screven County, Georgia.

The national cry for accountability and standards is addressed by Hayes Mizell, director of the Program for Student Achievement at the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, who recognizes both the power and the limits of standards-based reform.

A host of school change efforts are underway across the nation, not all of them aimed at preserving and improving public education. Barbara Miner of *Rethinking Schools* analyzes the moves by the right wing that are "taking aim at the very concept of public education," including advocating vouchers. The voucher proponents' Southern strategy, reviewed by *Southern Changes* managing editor Ellen Spears, is most succinctly summarized by Florida state PTA President-elect Patty Hightower who contends that voucher supporters, "really are trying to buy themselves out of having to provide an adequate educational system for all students."

As the local reformers echo, many public schools are changing for the better despite the challenges they face. But we cannot be content with an educational system that promises excellence for some. A society that is considering peacetime increases in the military budget and states and localities that are considering hefty increases in prison spending, should instead be devoting our resources to education. Dianne Piché of the Citizen's Commission on Civil Rights writes about the reauthorization battle for Title I, the only federal dollars targeted at equity in K-12 education.

Finally, we are celebrating the appearance later this spring of audio cassettes and compact discs of "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?," SRC's audio documentary of the Civil Rights Movement in five Southern cities. Producer of the Peabody Award-winning series George King has re-edited the oral histories and music into a valuable educational resource for schools and communities.

We invite you to join us as we call for new partnerships for school reform and spread our work for educational justice.

*Wendy S. Johnson is executive director of the Southern Regional Council.*

# Lessons Learned: A Decade of Education Reform

**By Sarah Ellen Torian**

"It's not a problem to be behind," George Washington Carver Middle School Principal Robert Markham constantly reminds students, teachers, and parents, "but it's an absolute sin to be behind and not try to catch up." Seeing Carver Middle School in Meridian, Mississippi, struggle to meet the needs of its majority-black students, many of whom receive free or reduced-cost lunches, Markham understands the challenge of engaging students. Markham looked beyond the negative media images of urban schools such as Carver that teach poor, black students without many black teachers or administrators to serve as positive role models when he became principal twelve years ago and set high expectations for all of Carver's students. He promotes a "family" atmosphere in which parents, students, and school personnel are working toward the same goal—to have *all* students reading, writing, and computing on grade level by the time they finish seventh grade.

Five years ago, Gwen Williams left her job as a middle school teacher in Atlanta, to become director of the Peachtree Urban Writing Project. The Project is one of 165 such sites around the world that empowers teachers as leaders and helps them improve their teaching of reading and writing. Williams and her team of ten teacher-consultants host study groups throughout the year. Hosted at Georgia State University, the project offers teachers ongoing professional support from Williams and her team, examining integrative and project-based learning. "With project-based learning," Williams says, "students initiate some of their own learning, so that they become critical thinkers and learners. It empowers students to learn through projects that they design."

In Monticello, Arkansas, only 52 percent of the adult population holds a high school diploma. Shirley Martin, the only one of six siblings to earn a college degree and one of the two who earned a high school diploma, is not satisfied with that low level of educational attainment. Since 1994 she has been project director of the Southeast Arkansas Foster Grandparents program, a part of the National Senior Service Corps. She currently leads a body of one-hundred senior volunteers in giving more than five-hundred "at risk" children, ranging in age from birth to second grade, the literacy skills they need. During the last school year, sixteen volunteers worked daily in a pilot program with first and second graders who had scored in the bottom quartile at their schools. By the end of the year, 58 percent were reading at or near their grade level and several were reading one or two levels above. "I want to be a piece of the picture for education reform," says Martin.

As it has for the past ten years, the Southern Regional Council continues to work with principals like Robert Markham, teachers like Gwen Williams, and community partners like Shirley Martin, as well as parents, administrators, community activists, and students. Together, SRC education staff and these leaders have identified problems and obstacles, and sought tools to improve teaching and learning in classrooms and in out-of-school programs across the South. Working as stagehands behind the curtains of reform, SRC's education staff helps communities and schools perform their roles. The production that SRC envisions with the actors is one where parents, school staff, and communities collaborate in systemic reform that will create classrooms in which students are actively engaged in learning and demonstrating their achievements.

Marcia Klenbort, director of SRC's Education Programs since 1991, explains SRC's behind-the-scenes role saying, "When working in and with a community, whatever we do there ourselves will be of short-term value. Instead we come as supporters of the local people who are taking the initiative to make the changes they want. We try to help them find ways to improve the schools and to monitor and grow those improvements themselves. The end result we hope for is a corps of local leaders who work effectively to provide children with a strong education."

The Southern Regional Council looks for places where people are already working to improve public education. It alerts them to support and training provided by the Council and other organizations, thereby fulfilling a mission to develop local leadership skills. Frequently, reforms begin with one person with a lot of drive, gumption, and ability to inform and mobilize others around school improvement.

Anne Cooper, a parent, a three-year veteran of the school board, and a former SRC Community Fellow (an SRC project launched in 1992 to locate and nurture local leaders across the South), has provided that force in Clarke County, Georgia. "It's been difficult to convince the people already on the board that the status quo wasn't working and wasn't serving all of our students," Cooper explains. She has been strategic in bringing new members onto the board and in advancing parent involvement.

In its effort to increase student achievement in the South, the Southern Regional Council has worked with teachers, principals, and administrators to help them cre-

LINDA HARRIS

*A school teacher supports two students with their group project at a Corpus Christi middle school. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation's Program for Student Achievement supports standards-based reform in urban middle schools across the country.*

ate more democratic and supportive governance structures in the schools and student-centered learning in the classrooms. SRC also works with parents and community activists, helping them act as "critical friends"—supporting schools as they push them to improve. SRC also provides training and support to the expanding force of community volunteers who, as a part of the America Reads Challenge, enter schools and out-of-school programs across the country daily to provide children with one-on-one instruction.

## A National Issue

Important nationwide reform efforts and debates over education issues occur daily: the availability and usage of technology; smaller classes; the application of standards and accountability when those standards are not met; vouchers to allow public school children to enter private schools; year-round schooling, and more. Although SRC attempts to inform the debate over some of these issues, its focus is rooted in the belief that lasting changes take place by working with the educators and the local people who can provide their support.

A decade and a half after the 1983 report, "A Nation at Risk," brought public attention to education by claiming that the United States actually faces security risks due to its failure to educate its children properly, education reform remains a hot topic. Polls show school reform as voters' biggest concern. *US News and World Report* recently declared that reactions to the state of public education has changed since "A Nation at Risk" was released, moving from the "Age of Lament" to the "Age of Accountability," defined by a movement toward clear standards for students and schools.

With this emphasis on accountability comes a need to examine the definition of educational success. Standardized tests poorly measure individual children's success. A strong focus on simply raising scores can lead schools away from real teaching and learning. When a school's "effectiveness" is measured only by a multiple-choice test score, and when more pressure is placed on a school to raise its "effectiveness level," classroom teaching in the months leading up to the almighty test date can deteriorate to the level of "How to make good guesses from the multiple choices" and "How to fill in the bubbles correctly."

Raising standards and strengthening accountability will mean nothing if children and teachers are not given the tools they need to meet standards and accountability



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

measures. Restructuring schools and changing whole communities' relationships to those schools in order to ensure that children are given the tools they need to succeed, however, is not a simple step.

Educational systems are complicated bureaucracies that often stymie change and innovation, but they can also invite it.

In 1995, then-superintendent Ben Canada invited the SRC to assist in a reform initiative called "Building a Culture for Middle School Student Achievement" in Atlanta's sixteen middle schools. As a part of that intiative, SRC convened meetings with the middle school principals to help them find the information and strategies to make changes in their school bureaucracies. After reading about school reforms, discussing Hayes Mizell's "The New Principal," hearing other principals discuss their experiences, and making site visits to successful schools, many of the principals became convinced of the potential of the reforms.

To successfully implement systemic reform, SRC also engaged parents, teachers, and other administrators. Together they planned goals of increased student achievement. One result was the Performance Project, a pilot program to implement performance-based teaching, learning, and assessment, actively engaging students in the learning process. Three years later, teachers report improved student performance and parental participation has increased 300 percent. Public school stakeholders are learning that, by enlisting the support of all involved, changes *can* and *must* be made.

## Ingredients of Effective School Reform

As more people become involved in the movement to make our public schools provide a strong, broad-based education to every child who enters their doors, SRC's education team would like to share some of the ingredients that bring about effective school reform.

**Share and learn from each other to counter isolation in schools.** Teachers spend the majority of each workday with their students, or planning their next lesson. Parents may drop their children off, but rarely enter the school to meet with teachers or other parents. Principals and administrators are encouraged to compete, to measure their school according to other schools in their district or area. This isolation intensifies in rural and urban areas of the South where entrenched racial and class divisions are still evident in the public school systems and school teachers and administrators can often avoid being held accountable for educating *all* children.

"When SRC began the Delta Principals Institute in 1992," says SRC Senior Program Officer Anika Jones "we were surprised to find that school leaders didn't know what a colleague ten miles away was doing. Then, when we began to work with large cities, we found the same dynamic—within a single city." An Atlanta principal demonstrated this isolation saying, "We used to only get to talk when our sports teams competed."

Regularly scheduling meetings during which teachers from one school can meet and talk with teachers from their own and other schools and similar meetings for parents and for principals and administrators can relieve some isolation. Such peer group meetings promote sharing of strengths developed and unconquered challenges. These exchanges foster a sense of collegiality and create a peer support network that is mutually beneficial to all involved. Recharged by their discussions with other teachers, many teachers are saying, "I never knew there were others out there who cared as much as I do."

Together, teachers can conceive of a cohesive strategy to reach their common goal of helping students learn and avoid the method of teachers concentrating only on what goes on in their individual classrooms. "So many teachers operate on the model of their classroom being a one-room schoolhouse," notes Gwen Williams. "'I'm in my room. I'm going to do my own thing. In your room, you do your thing.' It has to be a more collaborative plan, if you want to really help children learn."

Peer networks raise expectations and help participants see new possibilities. A year after Barbara Franklin became the first female and the first African-American principal at Mississippi's Batesville Intermediate School in 1991, she was beginning to think she had chosen the wrong school and possibly the wrong profession. That summer, when she attended the Delta Principals Institute, created and organized by the Southern Regional Council and the Delta Area Association for the Improvement of Schools, she had the chance to meet Robert Markham and other successful Mississippi principals. Markham recounted the obstacles his school faced and the strategies used to overcome those obstacles, resulting in both the National School of Excellence Award and the National Drug-Free School Award in the same year for his school. Franklin returned to Batesville with renewed energy and an understanding of how a school could be run effectively and meet the needs of its students. Two years after the Delta Principals Institute began, Batesville Intermediate School was honored by the state Department of Education as a state school of excellence—a rarity for a Delta school.

**Connect with Families.** With competing work and home schedules, building a network of parents can be difficult. At BRIDGES (Building Respect, Independence, and Development Generated through Extended Services), a family resource center in Fayetteville, North Carolina, Clarie White works to involve parents in their children's education and to provide them and other family members with skills to be effective educators.

BRIDGES offers workshops for parents and tutoring

programs for children. "We walk the parents through the education process," says White. "We tell them how important their role is *and* we suggest how they can help." BRIDGES provides parents with information they need to understand proposed changes in the school and to know what questions they need to ask the school board or teachers. "Cultivating parent involvement is a slow process," adds White, "but I feel we have been very successful. I have seen parents who come to our center and go on to become involved in the PTA who would not usually attend a PTA meeting."

**Create a Climate of Honesty.** When student achievement is low, teachers, administrators, and parents frequently blame each other for the failures. Anne Cooper has tried to encourage her Clarke County community to move beyond placing blame. "Let's stop assigning blame and let's start bringing people on board."

"Vertical" networks can help break the various barriers that separate the levels of a school community. In the Atlanta middle school reform initiative, "horizontal" peer networks of teachers, principals, and parents have expanded into an all-inclusive Advisory Council. Each network meets on its own, and also sends representatives to gather quarterly—as the Advisory Council, a vertical network that brings in people from all levels who share an interest in Atlanta's middle schools.

When the Advisory Council was first organized in 1995, participants had to break down barriers that exist in hierarchical relationships. SRC staff posed key questions to initiate open and frank discussions: "How can the school system help you do your job?" and "What strategies are working in your school?" These questions and discussions helped develop a collaborative relationship around the goal they share—to help *all* children learn.

**Draw Strength from Diversity.** American school diversity comes with a long history of resource inequities for minority groups that make up the heterogeneous community of a school or a district. Much of that history still maintains a foothold in our society, and continues to echo throughout the nation and region today.

The people who address training sessions or meetings should represent the diversity in the audience and in the school district. "Having a diverse group of trainers," explains SRC Education Director Marcia Klenbort, "is much more important and critical than anyone who is a member of a majority group can understand. If you usually associate with groups in which you are a part of the majority, you probably won't see the importance of having leaders who look like you, because you have grown used to the benefits of that advantage. If you are in the minority and the leaders and presenters never look like you, you feel you have to do a lot of translating to your own circumstances. And there is a silent ratification of self—for a participant—that comes when the leader looks like you."

The racial and class divisions that exist in both the South and the nation present barriers of animosity and hostility among groups within schools. Displaying—in presenters and all involved with the work in the school(s)—a partnership of equals between people of different racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds in the training team and encouraging the school community to model such partnerships can help to chip away at these barriers.

**Focus on the Areas of Greatest Need.** As more states institute performance standards for students, it becomes increasingly important to provide schools and school districts with the support they need to help students reach those standards. Students from areas of high concentrations of poverty face the greatest obstacles. Their schools will be the ones most affected by the raising of standards and the ones most in need of support. (See "Standards Reform," p. 27.)

Shirley Martin and her Foster Grandparent volunteers understand this kind of need. The fourth graders at nineteen of the twenty-one school districts in southeast Arkansas averaged below the fiftieth percentile in total reading scores. The volunteers are working to turn those statistics around. "I believe we can change the future for these children," maintains Martin. "The issue is accountability. Let's give them the resources they need to succeed, then hold them accountable. But, most of all, we must hold ourselves accountable for student achievement."

"Currently, not every child has the support and resources to be successful in school," says Atlanta's King King Middle School principal Carolyn Huff. To help provide all students with the necessary support and resources, Atlanta Public schools are developing "Opportunity to Learn Standards," a series of guidelines that define the financial, technical, and staff support schools will need to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to meet state and local standards.

Although the past twenty years have seen a great change in the process of dollar allocation among schools in a given district, vast inequalities exist in the resources schools can call upon. Affluent parents are likely to be more active, demanding the most qualified teachers, up-to-date equipment, and comprehensive class offerings. The effects are obvious. A report by Education Trust, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit, shows that poor and minority secondary students are more likely than other students to be taught by teachers lacking a college major or minor in the subjects they are teaching. In such a situation we are not "giving them the tools they need to succeed"!

**Foster Feelings of Ownership.** Members of a school community invest themselves in reform efforts when they know it is *their* effort and *their* goals. Trainers cannot construct this feeling of ownership, but they can help

# Robert Woodruff, Principal, Simmons Elementary School

*Robert Woodruff served as a senior Guide Principal with the Delta Principals Institute, a peer leadership development project led by SRC 1992-1997.*

I have been in the Hollandale, Mississippi school system for thirty-nine years, as both a teacher and an administrator.

I got into education by accident. I was a pre-med major and on my way to medical school when I stopped to visit my old roommate in Hollandale— my first visit to the Delta. My old roommate was an educator and, at that time, was teaching summer school. During my visit, his father, a local principal, asked me to teach a summer school science class. After I worked a few months, I decided to teach a year before I went to medical school.

*Robert Woodruff*

I can't describe the experience. The kids were encouraged by someone taking a great interest in helping them learn. The Delta is very rural and the main source of income at that time was agriculture. Most people lived in shanties. The conditions were just terrible. It was like a third world country.

So here are these kids, bright-eyed, really wanting to do something. I felt I could make a difference. I still intended to go to medical school, but after working that year, I decided to stay another year, and then another. That's how I ended up in education.

We've reduced class sizes and we've brought in some new programs. We give the students who score in the bottom quartile extra help—tutoring or whatever is necessary—to bring them up to grade level. We've gone back to some of the basic things that were successful in the past. We teach phonics again. We have after-school programs and before-school programs. We run on a ten-month school year.

Hollandale's population is about 3,500 and our school teaches seven hundred students with a staff of about sixty-five. The students are about 98 percent African American and about 98 percent of my kids eat free lunch.

Our kids are not exposed to a lot of things that urban kids are. We don't have the library facilities, the museums, and the parks. Therefore, our curriculum is designed to get kids out of the classrooms. If we are discussing the Mississippi River, we go to the Mississippi River. They go on field trips to Jackson, to Memphis, to Washington, D.C., to Houston and the Dallas area. It's a whole community; we go to the community and the community comes to us.

We use a curriculum designed by the Audrey Cohen College of Human Services called the American School Model. It is purpose-centered education. We have gone from the traditional teacher-centered mode to a child-centered format.

There is no magic formula. But we have experienced a lot of success in teaching African-American children. I attribute a lot of that success to having good staff. There is a critical shortage of teachers in Mississippi. But we attract and retain good teachers by treating our staff as family members.

This family atmosphere helps them work together across grades to help the kids. Instead of criticizing each other about what you didn't do in the prior grade, you can be critical of what children don't know before they are promoted, but from a positive standpoint.

We still need more community involvement and support. We have a lot of trouble with the private schools here. Most of the white kids go to the private schools. So you have some community neglect of public education. We make the difference up through grant funds and similar programs, but we still need a greater commitment.

Being in a rural area, with the mechanization of agriculture, people are realizing that you can't put an uneducated person on a $100,000 tractor anymore. The power brokers now realize that they need an educated worker. So, the community is coming around. Our churches and banks have supported us. My staff is now about 50-50 African American to white. We recently hired a lot of white teachers. Once they begin working here, you pull in their husbands and families and now they know that, "Hey, they're doing a good job over there. We didn't know that."

We are unintentionally destroying the private school system by gradually drawing away their staff and their students, too. A lot of the problem has been that they just didn't know that we were really serious about educating children. Now that they are aware, we will continue to make great progress.

In the forty years I've been in Hollandale, we have produced about twenty-one or twenty-two black doctors from this school district. We can't get them to come back to the Delta, but we have produced them. So, we have a track record of producing good students.

ROB AMBERG

*In Pine Bluff, Arkansas, a volunteer tutors a child in an after-school program funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts as part of its Youth-Adult Partnership.*

create an atmosphere in which the community gets its ideas on the table and begins working on them.

The teachers whom Gwen Williams trains in the Peachtree Urban Writing Project, frequently come to the training with the feeling that nothing can be done to make a difference in the children's lives. When the trainers can help them break through that mindset, they become inspired and rejuvenated. With that renewed mindset, the teachers from three Atlanta schools—Slater, Garden Hills, and Thomasville Elementary Schools—made the project their own and brought it into their schools. After attending the bi-monthly study groups hosted by Williams, they have initiated their own professional study groups with teacher teams in their schools. They meet to discuss research on writing such as *A Fresh Look at Writing* by Donald Graves and *Black Teachers on Teaching* by Michelle Foster and Lisa Delpit.

Deborah Mitchell, a teacher at Slater Elementary School and Atlanta Public Schools' teacher of the year for the 1998-99 school year, is the facilitator of Slater's teacher study group. "I am the facilitator—not the leader—and I certainly don't know it all," explains Mitchell. "We all know something; each teacher brings all of her experience and knowledge. Our ideas drive our discussion and learning."

Anne Cooper has also observed the benefits of cultivating ownership among all involved in reform efforts. She has been advocating for children in the Athens/Clarke County, Georgia school system since her son began kindergarten in 1984. In that time she has witnessed some of the morale problems that develop when reform planning is concentrated in the higher levels of school administration. "When the leadership—and this goes all the way to the top—fails to really articulate the goals and involve people in substantive planning that moves people closer to goals that are meaningful, people become disenchanted and cynical about what they are doing," says Cooper.

**Principals Are Key.** Teachers affect the students in the classrooms, but principals affect all the teachers, all the classes, and all the students. They affect the community too. Principals, through their visions, can set the stage for what will happen in a school. They can create an environment that encourages people to formulate and propose ideas by bringing staff and parents into planning sessions.

Controlling or autocratic principals cannot be effective in reforming an under-performing school. Principals must be ardent believers in the potential of the school community to provide its own answers. They must lead by example, and they must trust their staffs and delegate. King Middle School Principal Carolyn Huff in Atlanta,



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# Student Placement in the Southern States

| | African American | Asian | Latino | Native American | White | Total Number |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alabama | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 32.20 % | 0.70 % | 1.00 % | 0.40 % | 65.70 % | 1,215,985** |
| Public K-12 | 36.00 % | 0.60 % | 0.50 % | 0.70 % | 62.20 % | 746,149 |
| Gifted &Talented | 9.30 % | 1.50 % | 0.30 % | 0.20 % | 88.80 % | 23,459 |
| Special Education | 42.30 % | 0.10 % | 0.20 % | 0.30 % | 57.10 % | 71,186 |
| Suspensions | 61.60 % | 0.20 % | 0.20 % | 0.60 % | 37.40 % | 61,566 |
| Arkansas | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 21.3 % | 0.8 % | 2.3 % | 0.6 % | 75.2 % | 733,256 |
| Public K-12 | 23.8 % | 0.7 % | 1.5 % | 0.4 % | 73.6 % | 453,257 |
| Gifted & Talented | 15.7 % | 1.0 % | 0.5 % | 0.2 % | 82.7 % | 43,837 |
| Special Education | 27.8 % | 0.1 % | 0.6 % | 0.3 % | 71.2 % | 33,999 |
| Suspension | 37.8 % | 0.2 % | 0.4 % | 1.8 % | 59.9 % | 34,262 |
| District of Columbia | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 63.4 % | 3.2 % | 8.4 % | 0.2 % | 24.8 % | 121,629 |
| Public K-12 | 87.6 % | 1.4 % | 7.0 % | 0.0 % | 4.0 % | 79,802 |
| Gifted & Talented | 92.7 % | 1.0 % | 3.0 % | 0.0 % | 3.2 % | 4,632 |
| Special Education | 93.0 % | 0.1 % | 4.8 % | 0.0 % | 2.1 % | 4,325 |
| Suspensions | 85.6 % | 0.5 % | 9.0 % | 0.8 % | 4.1 % | 1,856 |
| Florida | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 21.0 % | 1.9 % | 15.9 % | 0.3 % | 60.9 % | 3,634,009 |
| Public K-12 | 25.3 % | 1.8 % | 15.3 % | 0.2 % | 57.6 % | 2,176,222 |
| Gifted & Talented | 7.7 % | 3.4 % | 7.7 % | 0.2 % | 81.0 % | 90,713 |
| Special Education | 29.7 % | 0.5 % | 12.3 % | 0.2 % | 57.3 % | 160,109 |
| Suspensions | 40.7 % | 0.7 % | 11.7 % | 0.2 % | 46.7 % | 182,536 |
| Georgia | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 33.6 % | 1.8 % | 3.1 % | 0.2 % | 61.2 % | 2,133,336 |
| Public K-12 | 37.9 % | 1.6 % | 2.2 % | 0.1 % | 58.2 % | 1,311,126 |
| Gifted & Talented | 12.5 % | 3.1 % | 0.5 % | 0.1 % | 83.8 % | 67,691 |
| Special Education | 41.8 % | 0.4 % | 1.1 % | 0.1 % | 56.6 % | 82,950 |
| Suspensions | 60.1 % | 0.5 % | 1.0 % | 0.1 % | 38.4 % | 132,607 |
| Kentucky | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 8.5 % | 0.7 % | 0.9 % | 0.1 % | 89.8 % | 1,108,343 |
| Public K-12 | 9.8 % | 0.6 % | 0.4 % | 0.1 % | 89.1 % | 659,821 |
| Gifted & Talented | 4.0 % | 1.2 % | 0.2 % | 0.0 % | 94.6 % | 37,939 |
| Special Education | 12.2 % | 0.1 % | 0.2 % | 0.0 % | 87.5 % | 40,952 |
| Suspensions | 18.3 % | 0.1 % | 0.1 % | 0.2 % | 81.4 % | 26,935 |
| Louisiana | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 38.2 % | 1.3 % | 2.5 % | 0.5 % | 57.4 % | 1,365,213 |
| Public K-12 | 46.0 % | 1.3 % | 1.1 % | 0.5 % | 51.1 % | 797,366 |
| Gifted & Talented | 17.3 % | 3.8 % | 0.9 % | 0.2 % | 77.8 % | 22,525 |
| Special Education | 56.9 % | 0.2 % | 0.7 % | 0.6 % | 41.6 % | 55,931 |
| Suspensions | 62.4 % | 0.5 % | 1.0 % | 0.6 % | 35.5 % | 94,388 |

*This chart shows the percentage of students in public school gifted and talented classes, and special education classes, as well as the suspension rate. States listed (plus D.C.) are served by the LEARNS (Linking Education and America Reads through National Service) Partnership at the Southern Regional Council. The Partnership includes lead partner Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Bank Street College of Education, and the SRC. Together they serve National Service programs throughout the country that focus on education. **Total population includes students not in any program. Source:* Education Watch 1998: State and National Data Book, Vol. II, *published by The Education Trust.*

| | African American | Asian | Latino | Native American | White | Total Number |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mississippi | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 44.7 % | 0.7 % | 0.8 % | 0.4 % | 53.3 % | 852,457 |
| Public K-12 | 51.0 % | 0.6 % | 0.3 % | 0.4 % | 47.7 % | 506,272 |
| Gifted &Talented | 17.2 % | 0.7 % | 0.2 % | 0.0 % | 81.8 % | 21,178 |
| Special Education | 61.7 % | 0.1 % | 0.1 % | 0.1 % | 38.0 % | 40,279 |
| Suspensions | 68.0 % | 0.5 % | 0.2 % | 0.3 % | 30.9 % | 49,977 |
| North Carolina | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 27.1 % | 1.3 % | 2.5 % | 1.6 % | 67.4 % | 2,023,423 |
| Public K-12 | 30.7 % | 1.3 % | 1.9 % | 1.5 % | 64.6 % | 1,183,090 |
| Gifted & Talented | 9.7 % | 2.0 % | 0.5 % | 0.3 % | 87.6 % | 100,929 |
| Special Education | 41.2 % | 0.2 % | 0.9 % | 1.0 % | 56.7 % | 90,818 |
| Suspension | 53.4 % | 0.3 % | 0.8 % | 0.9 % | 44.6 % | 114,631 |
| Oklahoma | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 9.2 % | 1.3 % | 4.8 % | 10.0 % | 74.7 % | 982,877 |
| Public K-12 | 10.4 % | 1.3 % | 3.9 % | 15.0 % | 69.4 % | 616,393 |
| Gifted & Talented | 5.6 % | 1.5 % | 1.5 % | 14.4 % | 77.0 % | 62,090 |
| Special Education | 15.6 % | 0.2 % | 2.7 % | 15.2 % | 66.3 % | 44,734 |
| Suspensions | 23.2 % | 0.3 % | 3.0 % | 11.9 % | 61.8 % | 27,691 |
| South Carolina | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 37.3 % | 0.9 % | 1.3 % | 0.3 % | 60.3 % | 1,061,962 |
| Public K-12 | 41.7 % | 0.7 % | 0.7 % | 0.2 % | 56.7 % | 645,586 |
| Gifted & Talented | 14.2 % | 1.6 % | 0.4 % | 0.1 % | 83.8 % | 57,202 |
| Special Education | 54.1 % | 0.1 % | 0.3 % | 0.1 % | 45.4 % | 48,846 |
| Suspensions | 62.3 % | 0.2 % | 0.4 % | 0.1 % | 37.0 % | 81,394 |
| Tennessee | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 20.7 % | 1.0 % | 1.3 % | 0.2 % | 76.8 % | 1,469,407 |
| Public K-12 | 23.0 % | 0.9 % | 0.8 % | 0.4 % | 74.9 % | 893,770 |
| Gifted & Talented | 9.2 % | 1.7 % | 0.2 % | 0.0 % | 88.9 % | 28,208 |
| Special Education | 22.5 % | 0.2 % | 0.2 % | 0.0 % | 77.1 % | 73,119 |
| Suspensions | 35.7 % | 0.3 % | 0.3 % | 0.1 % | 63.6 % | 69,011 |
| Texas | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 13.2 % | 2.4 % | 35.5 % | 0.3 % | 48.7 % | 5,839,047 |
| Public K-12 | 14.3 % | 2.3 % | 36.7 % | 0.3 % | 46.4 % | 3,748,167 |
| Gifted & Talented | 10.3 % | 3.8 % | 21.8 % | 0.2 % | 64.0 % | 269,280 |
| Special Education | 17.9 % | 0.5 % | 34.7 % | 0.2 % | 46.7 % | 292,578 |
| Suspensions | 27.0 % | 1.0 % | 40.6 % | 0.2 % | 31.2 % | 164,044 |
| Virginia | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 22.8 % | 3.6 % | 4.1 % | 0.2 % | 69.3 % | 1,826,440 |
| Public K-12 | 26.5 % | 3.5 % | 3.2 % | 0.2 % | 66.6 % | 1,079,854 |
| Gifted & Talented | 11.2 % | 5.7 % | 1.6 % | 0.1 % | 81.3 % | 111,442 |
| Special Education | 30.7 % | 1.4 % | 3.3 % | 0.1 % | 64.4 % | 91,017 |
| Suspensions | 48.5 % | 1.4 % | 3.0 % | 0.4 % | 46.7 % | 99,271 |
| West Virginia | | | | | | |
| Population: Age 5 - 24 | 3.6 % | 0.5 % | 0.6 % | 0.1 % | 95.1 % | 502,420 |
| Public K-12 | 4.0 % | 0.4 % | 0.3 % | 0.1 % | 95.2 % | 307,112 |
| Gifted & Talented | 1.0 % | 1.4 % | 0.2 % | 0.1 % | 97.3 % | 7,163 |
| Special Education | 4.4 % | 0.1 % | 0.1 % | 0.1 % | 95.2 % | 29,128 |
| Suspensions | 6.5 % | 0.1 % | 0.2 % | 1.1 % | 92.2 % | 19,463 |

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# Dr. Lisa Delpit on Educational Excellence

*Dr. Lisa Delpit is the Director of the Center for Urban Educational Excellence and holds the Benjamin E. Mays Chair of Urban Educational Leadership at Georgia State University. Author of the book,* Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom, *Delpit has engaged in teaching and learning about multicultural societies and public education in Fiji, Papua, New Guinea, and the United States—including Alaska. Using a similar model, Delpit's experience ratifies the Southern Regional Council's approach to changing schools.*

In an urban setting like Atlanta, the first issue in improving education is to ensure that teachers believe that the children are capable of learning anything anybody else is capable of learning. You have to give teachers visions of what can be. They are so accustomed to being a part of failure that they don't realize that children who look like their school's population can and have succeeded in other settings. The teachers also need to be willing to use a multitude of instructional strategies—rather than just using one strategy over and over again—to ensure that all children are grasping the issues that they need to understand to be successful. When teachers teach only through one model, and the kids don't learn, then they think something is wrong with the kids. Instead, the problem may be that teachers aren't reaching the students.

That's what I do. I try to change those perceptions because the reality is that nothing can change until the classroom changes. You can make all the systemic changes you want, but until what goes on in the classroom changes, then I don't think a whole lot will change.

You almost have to work from all sides of a school system at the same time. If you leave any one area unattended, it can create a black hole into which all of your good work and success gets sucked.

For example, if a group of teachers were trying to work together to integrate curriculum, but the principal does not understand the value of what they are doing, that principal might do something as simple as change a planning schedule so the teachers are unable to meet together. That could destroy their effort. Or maybe the school does not make an effort to engage the parents in the planning process. The parents, if they don't understand what the school is trying to do, can see it as short-changing their children and they can attack or destroy the program from that direction.

You have to work with all of the players. You have to work with the teachers to help them develop ways to work together and feel comfortable with each other. You also have to inform and work with the parents.

You need to get folks with a lot of energy and commitment and just do it. Provide them with a vision of what could be and then have the teachers themselves plan it and work on it. It empowers them at the same time that you are creating the vision and the new instructional methodologies.

describes her role in the school saying, "There is overwhelming responsibility on me to lead, but I try to do so by embodying those things that I ask staff to do."

Principals are a necessary part of any successful school reform effort, but they do not need to be the initiators of that effort. Teachers, parents, or other administrators can and should introduce change. It is imperative though, that they seek the principal's input and support early.

Theodora Perrot is site manager for a Seniors for Schools volunteer project in Port Arthur, Texas. Seniors for Schools is a demonstration project that enlists men and women over the age of fifty-five to help children learn to read. Perrot has seen the benefit of seeking the principal's support early on. Noting the benefits of the cooperation and strong hands-on approach of Sharon Adams, her school's principal, Perrot says, "When the program was being introduced, we first sold it to Principal Adams. Once she bought into it, she sold it to the whole school." Now Adams is a key advocate for the Seniors project with the district and the larger community.

### Addressing Race and Class Barriers

During the 1960s and 1970s, the strategies discussed in this essay would not have worked in the American South or in much of the country. First, it was necessary, through legal challenges such as *Brown v. The Board of Education*, to attack the blatant racism of separate and *very* unequal that defined the public school systems in the South.

Today, entrenched divisions along racial and class lines continue to divide communities and schools. Many city, county, and school governments still rest firmly in the hands of wealthy white elites who might not even send their children to the public schools. Without a direct connection to the school system, those in power can be content with a status quo that is far from acceptable. Even if the children of white elites do attend public schools, their parents can be content with a system that, through tracking and other unfair policies, segregates its students and does not strive to offer *all* students a strong education.

Karen Watson, a community activist in Sylvania, Georgia, has run up against this form of barrier. For more than ten years, she and the Positive Action Committee(PAC), a group of parents and concerned citizens in Screven County, have been fighting to provide the majority-black families in Sylvania/Screven County's schools a voice in their own education. (Watson was an SRC Community Fellow in 1992.)

Every official employee of the city and county governments was white. "The only positions that blacks held in local government were sanitation," Watson explains. "Not even one policeman." The school board was all-white and almost all teachers and administrators in the public schools were white. At the same time, the majority of children in those schools were black and many were being tracked into lower level classes. Evidence of racism was there, but the school board ignored PAC's requests for changes.

PAC spent years documenting the situation and carried the resulting facts and figures to the Office of Civil Rights, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, and the court system. Their efforts brought Secretary of Education Richard Riley to the state in 1994 and brought an end to some of the detrimental tracking policies. The seven-member board now includes three African Americans; a principal, an assistant principal, and the director of Title I programs are also black.

Although Watson and PAC have witnessed some success, she remains concerned, knowing that similar situations continue to exist across the South. "It is clear that black children who attend schools in states and counties which have a history of practicing racial discrimination, are more likely to receive an education inferior to white students." Watson says. "When there are few or no black adults in the school system, it increases the chances that negative and unfair things can happen to black children."

To combat these lingering pockets of unabashed racism in the public schools, Watson is working with Brian Kintisch and the Center for Children and Education (CCE), helping parents in situations similar to Screven County's advocate for themselves. While working for Legal Aid in Washington, D.C., Kintisch discovered that he was primarily representing parents whose children had been suspended without cause. Kintisch organized CCE to work in areas where parents and students are disenfranchised and allowed no meaningful roles in the education system.

The Southern Regional Council partners with the CCE and supports its work. SRC focuses on locating the strengths in the schools—because all schools do have strengths—and then helps the schools to develop collaborative models to make the most of those strengths. When groups such as CCE confront and challenge unfair practices, SRC helps to re-establish relationships that can build progress on the foundation created through the conflict.

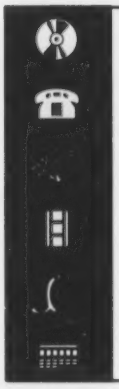
## Cost of Prison Versus Cost of College

| State | College | Prison |
|---|---|---|
| Alabama | $7,020 | $9,351 |
| Arkansas | $6,116 | $13,125 |
| Distict of Columbia | $1,502 | $25,119 |
| Florida | $6,295 | $16,564 |
| Georgia | $6,567 | $17,440 |
| Kentucky | $7,256 | $14,027 |
| Louisiana | $6,273 | $13,089 |
| Mississippi | $5,691 | $11,136 |
| North Carolina | $6,630 | $20,933 |
| Oklahoma | $6,120 | $14,279 |
| South Carolina | $7,240 | $13,279 |
| Tennessee | $5,840 | $19,706 |
| Texas | $6,854 | $14,421 |
| Virginia | $8,885 | $16,589 |
| West Virginia | $6,846 | $17,159 |

*The figures above compare the annual taxpayer cost of maintaining an individual in prison to the price of tuition and room and board at the state's leading public university 1997. Source:* Education Watch 1998: State and National Data Book, Vol. II, *published by The Education Trust.*

Whether conflict is required or not, the education of *all* of our children is the key to our nation's future. But more importantly, as Shirley Martin learned and now believes, a strong education is also the key to their futures. "I believe that we can change the future for our children," says Martin. "I know learning certainly changed my life." ■

*Sarah Ellen Torian is program assistant in communications at the Southern Regional Council. SRC education staff contributed to this article: Marcia Klenbort, Anika Jones, Tenera McPherson, Robyn Davis, Gale Greenlee, and Reneé Wood.*

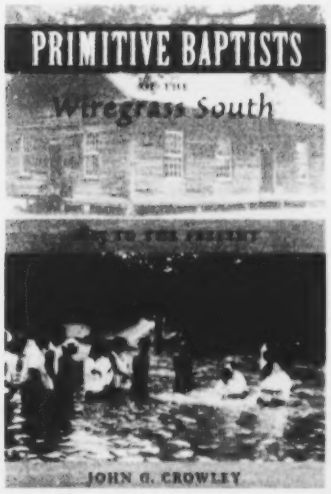



THIS PUBLICATION AVAILABLE FROM UMI

UMI

A Bell & Howell Company
Box 49, 300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346
800-521-0600 toll-free
313-761-1203 fax

UNIVERSITY PRESS OF Florida




**Primitive Baptists of the Wiregrass South**
*1815 to the Present*
John G. Crowley
"A superb study of Primitive Baptist belief and practice in a specific region of the South. Expands our knowledge of an often neglected group."—Bill Leonard, dean, School of Divinity, Wake Forest University
• John Crowley, a historian and former Primitive minister, chronicles the origins of Primitive Baptist's and their expansion into South Georgia and Florida, documenting one of the strongest aspects of the inner life of the local piney-woods culture.
Cloth, $49.95

**The African-American Experience in the Civilian Conservation Corps**
Olen Cole, Jr.
An important and much neglected chapter in American history, Cole's study should interest students of New Deal politics, state and national park history, and the African-American experience in the 20th century.
Cloth, $49.95

*Order through full-service booksellers, with VISA or M/C toll free: 1-800-226-3822, or through our website at www.upf.com.*

***The Florida History and Culture Series***
Series Editors: Gary Mormino and Raymond Arsenault

**"Come to My Sunland"**
*Letters of Julia Daniels Moseley from the Florida Frontier, 1882–1886*
Edited by Julia Winifred Moseley and Betty Powers Crislip
Cloth, $29.95

**Gladesmen**
*Gator Hunters, Moonshiners, & Skiffers*
Glen Simmons and Laura Ogden
Cloth, $24.95

**The Enduring Seminoles**
*From Alligator Wrestling to Ecotourism*
Patsy West
Cloth, $24.95

**Beechers, Stowes, and Yankee Strangers**
*The Transformation of Florida*
John T. Foster and Sarah Whitmer Foster
Cloth, $24.95

GAINESVILLE · TALLAHASSEE · TAMPA · BOCA RATON · PENSACOLA · ORLANDO · MIAMI · JACKSONVILLE

# Tracking Hurts Children

**By Marcia Klenbort**

**What is "tracking"?** A high school sophomore who spent most of his schooling in low-level courses, says: "You live in the basement, you die in the basement. You know what I mean?"

**Where did "tracking" in Southern classrooms originate?** When desegregation moved from a fear in the minds of Southern white legislators, elected officials and school leaders, to a reality, the most frequent measure taken to resegregate the schools along racial lines was to separate students according to "ability groups." It was known as "tracking" because children put in a certain ability group (low, medium, or high) tended to stay there.

**Is tracking still used today?** It is. It is sanctioned by state departments of education, which plan for "gifted and talented" programs for about 5 percent of the student population. Those offer the liveliest curriculum, the most hands-on activities, the greatest choice for students, and frequently have the best teachers. Research shows that *all* students benefit from these conditions.

**Who is concerned about the negative effects tracking?** The loudest and most persistent critic of tracking is C.A.R.E. (Coalition of Alabamians Reforming Education) in Selma, Alabama. It was started by Rose Sanders, an attorney, songwriter, playwright, parent, and ardent advocate for education for black and for poor children.

**What do students have to say?** Students from Selma City and Dallas County, Alabama, schools describe their schools as chaotic places where teachers are ill-equipped to teach and clearly uninterested in children. There is no modeling among teachers of intellectual rigor, of multicultural sharing, or of taking students seriously.

**Where can I read more about tracking?** Anne Wheelock's *Crossing the Tracks: How "Untracking" Can Save America's Schools* (1992, New Press, New York) tells of teachers and students nationwide who achieve in heterogeneously grouped classrooms.

Jeanie Oakes' *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality* (1985, Yale University Press, New Haven) is a classic study of tracking. ■

*Marcia Klenbort is director of education programs at the Southern Regional Council. For more information on C.A.R.E., call Jasmine Smith at 334-875-9264, or write to C.A.R.E. at 1 Union Street, Selma, AL 36701.*



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# The Right Attacks Public Schools

By Barbara Miner

The religious right, helped by more moderate conservative forces, is taking aim at the very concept of public education.

Buoyed by the conservative movement's success in gutting welfare and other social programs, the religious right increasingly is targeting its sights on public schools.

The survival of this country's tradition of public education has far-reaching implications for all who are committed to a democratic society that respects diversity. No matter how much this tradition is tarnished and battered in practice, it remains a cornerstone of our democratic vision.

Both the religious right and the broader conservative movement understand that schools play an essential role in instilling society's values in a new generation of people. They know that if they are to reverse the gains of the women's, civil rights, environmental, and gay rights movements, they must pay attention to school curriculum and culture.

People for the American Way Foundation, a civil liberties advocacy group in Washington, D.C., points out that the religious right's education agenda has two main goals:

- Redirect substantial public tax dollars into private, religious schools serving the religious right's core constituency; and,
- Use whatever public education system remains to impose narrow, Biblically-based beliefs on America's next generation.

The main political emphasis of the religious right—particularly on a national level—is to implement voucher programs and tax initiatives that use public dollars to help fund religious schools. The beauty of vouchers, from the religious right's perspective, is that fundamentalist parents could send their children to religious schools controlled by Christian fundamentalists—and have the public pay for it.

Deanna Duby, director of education policy for People for the American Way, notes that national organizations such as The Christian Coalition and Focus on the Family have also put a high priority on affecting local policy for school boards. She points to the enormous amount of material generated by right-wing organizations on how to become involved in education, including radio programs, books, videos, and training workshops.

The religious right has been increasingly successful in imposing its agenda on public schools. For instance, it successfully pushed to pass federal legislation mandating abstinence-only sex education. It has also stepped up its censorship of controversial books, particularly those with gay or lesbian themes or those dealing with adolescent sexuality. Further, the religious right has so intimidated some science teachers that they no longer discuss the theory of evolution—considered by scientists to be the cornerstone of modern biology.

## Conservative Alliance

On its own, the religious right does not have the popular support or political clout to implement its agenda. In recent decades, however, it has forged a working relationship with more mainstream conservatives in the Republican Party—an unholy alliance in which each wing of the Party is trying to use the other to its advantage. The alliance rests on an understanding by both groups that sustaining this coalition is crucial if the Republican Party is to dominate the country's political structures. Thus, even when more moderate conservatives disagree with the religious right , they rarely speak up publicly for fear of jeopardizing the alliance and/or incurring the religious right's wrath.

Periodically, the religious right threatens to bolt from the Republican Party if more mainstream conservatives do not adopt its agenda. As *New York Times* columnist Frank Rich wrote in the summer of 1998, "The religious right now demands an ideological purity that few to the left of the U.S. Taxpayers Party can meet." When threats are made, mainstream Republicans tend to bow down before the religious right and try to smooth over the differences.

If progressives are to defeat the religious right's agenda, they must scrutinize both the points of unity and the points of difference within the right's attack on the schools, and begin to drive a wedge between the religious right and its allies in more mainstream conservatism.

Chip Berlet, who has researched the right wing for over twenty years and is currently with the Boston-based watch-dog group Political Research Associates, argues that progressives must begin to exploit the contradictions within the right. "It's a coalition and like all coalitions, there are points of unity and points of divergence," Berlet told *Rethinking Schools*. "What has allowed them to operate, in part, is that their points of difference have not been scrutinized sufficiently."

## The Key Difference: Religion

From the outside, it often appears that conservatives are of one mind on education: abolish the U.S. Department of Education; return all educational authority to states and localities; and push for school prayer, vouchers, and privatization.

But their seeming unity masks important differences. The most significant cleavage is between the religious right, which seeks to place Biblical law at the center of public policy, and those who remain secular in their orientation despite rhetoric that often matches that of the religious right.

"The key difference is in the word religion," argues George Kaplan, an educational analyst in Washington, D.C., who has studied the religious right.

Kaplan sees a theocratic vision at the heart of the religious right's agenda, in keeping with evangelical Christianity's belief in a literal interpretation of the Bible. For this reason, Christian rightists are obsessed with their children receiving religious instruction as the foundation of their school curriculum. A number of religious right organizations reflect this parental obsession and place education issues at the center of their political work. These include: Louis Sheldon's Traditional Values Coalition; Rev. Donald Wildmon's American Family Association, based in Tupelo, Mississippi; Citizens for Excellence in Education/National Association of Christian Educators; Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum, located in Alton, Illinois; Rev. James Dobson's Focus on the Family, headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado; and Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition, based in Chesapeake, Virginia.


CLASSROOM CRUSADES

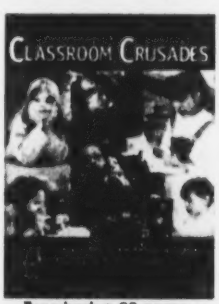
RESPONDING TO THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT'S AGENDA FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Classroom Crusades* covers the religious right's efforts to stamp their own brand of politics and religion upon our country's schools. Essential reading for anyone who values the Bill of Rights and American democracy.

ONLY $5 EACH!
plus $3.50 S&H

*2 - 24 copies*
$4.00/each plus S&H
*25+ copies*
$3.00/each plus S&H

SHIPPING & HANDLING
Shipping and handling costs are 10% of the total. Minimum S&H charge of $3.50.



Paperback • 80 pages

Published by Rethinking Schools
1001 E. Keefe Ave. Milw., WI 53212

ORDER TOLL-FREE: 1-800-669-4192
VISA AND MC ACCEPTED


Lee Berg, a Baptist minister who has studied the religious right for over twenty years and now works with the human and civil rights division of the National Education Association (NEA), argues that too many people underestimate the extent to which the religious right is committed to a theocracy—a government based on a literal interpretation of Biblical principles. Berg points out that many of the top leaders in the religious right have been strongly influenced by Christian Reconstructionism. The movement, in essence, seeks to replace democracy with a theocratic form of government. It argues that secular law is always secondary to biblical law, and that it is the duty of Christians to see that God's law is paramount throughout society. Though the movement has received minimal attention in the mainstream media, some analysts consider it the driving ideology of the leadership of the religious right.

The defining text of reconstructionism, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, is an 800-page tome written in 1973 by Rousas John Rushdoony. By providing a theological basis for Christian involvement in politics, it helped spur the growth of the religious right. In it Rushdoony writes: "The only true order is founded on Biblical law. All law is religious in nature, and every non-Biblical law-order represents an anti-Christian religion."

While religious conservatives base their ideology on a narrow interpretation of the Bible, economic conservatives pay homage to corporate capitalism and unrestrained markets. Economic conservatives are primarily concerned with increasing the freedom of the market—by cutting taxes, privatizing government services, and reducing government social programs, especially federal programs that redistribute resources and serve the needs of low-income people and people of color.

Educators familiar with the issues argue that the differences between the religious right and the economic right sometimes appear to be based on rhetoric and emphasis—for example, how strongly they push for school prayer or how strongly they attack the rights of gay and lesbian students. Those differences, however, ultimately stem from a fundamental split over the role of religion in education.

Economic conservatives "believe that the free market drives civilization, while the religious right believes that God drives civilization," notes Berlet. "Just because God is driving the same way right now as corporate capitalism is a fortunate coincidence for the right."

## Common Ground

Religious and economic conservatives try to mask their strategic differences over the role of religion. Thus they are able to join forces on a number of issues. Most importantly, they both are pushing on the federal and

state level for vouchers that would provide tax dollars for private and religious schools. They also support other privatization efforts, such as contracting to for-profit businesses—everything from food service to, in some cases, the entire running of a school.

They both also have an antipathy toward federal education programs, in particular those designed to lessen inequalities due to race, gender, disabilities, or economic status. Both argue that the federal government tilted too far to the advantage of poor people and people of color, and that liberals tilted too far to the left on cultural issues.

Of the various education issues uniting religious and economic conservatives, vouchers hold primary importance. Using public dollars to provide vouchers to private schools remains the main political goal of both the religious right and its allies in more mainstream conservatism. A key to defeating the right-wing education agenda of both the religious right and its allies in more mainstream conservatism is to defeat the voucher movement.

## The Importance of Vouchers

For religious conservatives, the voucher movement provides a way to funnel public dollars into private Christian schools. For economic conservatives, vouchers serve a number of purposes, including furthering an overall goal of privatizing government services and dismantling social entitlements, as well as undermining the role of government in providing for the good of all. "To privatize public education is the centerpiece, the grand prize of their overall agenda," Ann Bastian writes in the booklet published by Rethinking Schools, Ltd. in 1996, *Selling Out Our Schools: Vouchers, Markets, and the Future of Public Education.*

Vouchers also serve an important political function for the conservative movement, whether efforts to legislate their use are successful or not. As Bastian writes: "Vouchers unify the different strands of the right: business entrepreneurs looking for a new public carcass to feed on, having used up the Cold War; anti-government libertarians who worship the free market, having noticed that education is the society's largest public institution; social and religious conservatives who want to break down the separation of church and state, while garnering public funds to run their own schools. Many issues divide the right; vouchers unite them and provide an organizing platform."

Politically, vouchers also provide a way to make inroads into the urban Democratic base. Most legislative voucher proposals have targeted low-income students in urban districts and support for vouchers has been stronger among urban African Americans —who are the group most dis-served by the U.S. educational system—than among white Republican suburbanites, who tend, by and large, to be satisfied with their schools.

The voucher movement often uses the rhetoric of "school choice," masking its actual goal, which is to promote a system of vouchers to pay for private school attendance. In fact, most voucher proposals don't even use the term "voucher."

Vouchers refer specifically to plans to use public tax dollars to help parents pay tuition at private schools, including religious schools. School choice, in contrast, is a much broader concept that also encompasses proposals to let students attend public schools in other districts, or that allows students to choose various public schools within a district.

As of September 1998, the only operating voucher programs were initiatives in Milwaukee and Cleveland. In both cities, conservatives have included religious schools in the programs. Lawsuits have been filed in both cities on grounds that the inclusion of religious schools violates the separation of church and state. Ultimately, the issue is expected to go before the U.S. Supreme Court. (Even if found constitutional, vouchers raise key public policy issues. Should voucher schools, for instance, be considered private schools that can ignore accountability measures that public schools must follow? Will the voucher schools be able, for instance, to teach that homosexuality is a sin and that creationism is credible science?)

Four efforts to institute statewide voucher programs—in Oregon, California, Colorado, and Washington State—have been put to the voters. All were defeated by a margin of roughly 2-1. On the federal level, conservatives have tried, to date unsuccessfully, to institute some form of voucher program either through tax measures or so-called "scholarship" programs for low-income students.

Given the difficulties of getting a full-scale voucher program passed, some Republicans are emphasizing tuition tax credits or tax-free savings accounts. Such measures, which are politically appealing because they are packaged as "tax relief," provide a back-handed way for the government to help middle-class parents pay for private schools.

## Conclusion

It is easiest to point to various areas where economic and religious conservatives agree on education issues. But if one is to try to drive a wedge into their working coalition, it is important to identify the issues on which they disagree—and to publicize those disagreements. The religious right, for instance, often emphasizes an opposition to gay rights, national curriculum standards, and the evils of secular humanism. They support homeschooling, creationism, school prayer, and censorship of what they see as objectionable books.

The religious right also masks its true agenda when it is organizing parents at the local level. Thus it is often able to build coalitions of parents and community people who may not agree with the religious right's overall goals but

who are concerned about educational issues raised by the religious conservatives. For instance, well-meaning parents might become involved in a religious-right campaign around curricular issues, such as the teaching of reading.

The religious right has emphasized both electing fundamentalists to local school boards and training fundamentalist parents and pastors to organize in local schools. No one knows for sure how many religious conservatives serve on the country's 15,000 local school boards, but the number is possibly in the thousands. Sometimes the candidates are openly affiliated with religious fundamentalist organizations; often they are what is known as "stealth" candidates who conceal their true beliefs until elected. As one Christian Coalition member said at a workshop during the coalition's 1995 convention, "We are told not to identify ourselves as Christian Coalition members, just as John Q. Public." Ralph Reed, then executive director of the Christian Coalition, told convention-goers: "I would exchange the Presidency for 2,000 school board seats in the United States."

Despite popular concern about the state of our public schools, there remains widespread and deep support for a public system of schools that provides an equal education for all—no matter how tarnished that ideal may be in reality. If the religious right were to win its agenda, that long-standing ideal would be abandoned. ■

*Barbara Miner is managing editor of* Rethinking Schools, *a grassroots newspaper based in Milwaukee, WI. This article is excerpted with permission from "Classroom Crusades: Responding to the Religious Right's Agenda for Public Schools," published by Rethinking Schools, Ltd. (www.rethinkingschools.org). For a free catalog call 1-800-669-4192.*

# Promote Educational Success, Not Failure

**By Gregory Malhoit**

North Carolina's State Board of Education seems determined to adopt a "quick fix" education policy that could hold back thousands of students who fail state-administered multiple-choice tests.

The policy is grade retention—an approach that has been experimented with in many school systems and studied by educational researchers. After decades of research, many have concluded that grade retention does far more harm than good, increasing discipline problems and dropout rates while hurting long-term student achievement.

Grade retention ignores what we know about the development of human intelligence: namely that children learn at different rates, just as they grow in spurts. They are human beings with unique skills and abilities, most of which cannot be measured by one multiple-choice test. We also know that some students don't test well, and that tests are not a perfect measure of what students know. Nevertheless, the proposed grade promotion policy places total reliance on a test score. It discounts students' classroom work, and encourages teachers to teach to the test.

Grade retention may also violate the civil rights of minority, special-education and non-English speaking students. The State Board knows that at-risk children are not currently passing the tests, and that these students will be most dramatically impacted by the proposed policy. Yet the State Board doesn't have a realistic plan to guarantee at-risk students an equal opportunity to be promoted.

Higher standards for students must come with an investment of new dollars. Our lowest-performing students won't stand much of a chance of meeting the new standards if we do not have smaller classes, summer school, after-school, and tutorial programs.

The State Board of Education should determine exactly what new resources are needed to provide at-risk students with programs that can make up for years of educational neglect in order to give every child a fair chance to be promoted. The State Board must insist on an up-front commitment of necessary dollars by lawmakers. If the money isn't there, then the policy should not go into effect.

It's time for parents and the public to look beyond the political rhetoric and start asking some tough questions of our state's education leaders. In the rhetoric and debate over social promotion, our leaders seem to have lost sight of the fact that we are talking about children. Making judgments about children's futures based on a bureaucratic benchmark of what is "above average" is just another way of denying our children the right to be human.

*Gregory Malhoit is director of the North Carolina Education and Law Project, a Raleigh-based education policy and legal advocacy center that promotes improved educational opportunities for at-risk students.*

# Vouchers Push Moves South

**By Ellen Spears**

Several Southern state legislatures are considering controversial school voucher proposals, which public education advocates call a thinly veiled ploy to undermine public school funding and secure public funding for religious schools. Bills introduced in Florida, Texas, and Georgia would deduct money from state school budgets to fund private school tuition and are being targeted at minorities and students at low performing schools, according to opponents of the initiatives.

"The South is the next big area for vouchers," said Jamie Daly of People for the American Way, "both Florida and Texas are going to be the next big battles."

Daly, a critic of voucher programs, is most concerned about Florida's proposal. On March 25, in a mostly partisan 71-49 vote, the Florida House approved a limited voucher program. It will now move to the Republican-controlled Senate where it is expected to face stronger opposition. Supported by Governor Jeb Bush and Lt. Governor Frank Brogan, former Florida commissioner of education, the bill would provide "opportunity scholarships."

> *"Pro-voucher legislators say they are trying to help poor kids, but really they are trying to buy themselves out of having to provide an adequate educational system for all students."*
>
> —Florida state PTA President-elect Patty Hightower

The legislation has generated an opposition group, the Florida Coalition for Public Education, which includes educators, teacher unions, principals' organizations, and parent groups, like the PTA. "Pro-voucher legislators say they are trying to help poor kids," said Florida state PTA President-elect Patty Hightower, "but really they are trying to buy themselves out of having to provide an adequate educational system for all students."

Floridians for School Choice advertises the A+ program on its web site as "publicly funded scholarships to some of the most deserving students in the state."

Texas is anticipating a prolonged fight over similar measures. Governor Bush's brother in Texas, Governor George Bush, is also supporting a voucher program, though the bill most likely to receive attention has not yet been filed. Ted Bivins (R-Amarillo) is planning to introduce a pilot project, again targeted at schools with consistently low average student scores on standardized tests.

Carolyn Boyle of the Texas Coalition for Public Schools, which includes thirty groups that oppose private school vouchers, said "even a pilot project is a bad idea. There is not enough money to pay for the public schools now," Boyle said. "Texas is rural, and there are no private schools," Boyle continued.

Boyle sees the tide shifting against vouchers, even among traditional supporters. "Legislators are realizing that this would take public money away for private schools," said Boyle, "Even a lot of Republicans are changing their minds."

While efforts to pass voucher programs failed in Virginia and Mississippi, two Georgia proposals have provoked debate. One of the bills, filed by state Senator Clay Land (R-Columbus), called the Early HOPE Scholarship Act of 1999, was named for the immensely popular college scholarship program established under former Georgia Governor Zell Miller.

The proposal, which failed in committee, would have allowed up to 90 percent of the state's per pupil allotment to be given to an individual low-income elementary or middle school student at schools which test below national standards for three years. Under the proposal, tuition could be used at a private school or at an "adequate public school" nearby.

Georgia's first-term Democratic Governor Barnes has committed to establishing a task force on education to develop a comprehensive approach for school improvement in the state.

"Vouchers would only undermine the financial strength of our schools and our already weakened rural public schools," said Brian Kintisch, director of the Macon-based Center for Law and Education.

"The majority of public school students in Georgia could never take advantage of vouchers," Kintisch said, "because they live in rural areas without access to private schools. There could be no benefit for a public school student in a rural area, whether white or black, rich or poor." ■

*Ellen Spears is managing editor of* Southern Changes.

# Education Is Key to Reducing Racial Inequality

*A national survey of racial attitudes conducted by John Doble Research Associates for the Southern Regional Council (see* Southern Changes, *Spring 1997 and Spring and Winter 1998) found that most Americans see education as crucial to overcoming racial inequality. The research included four focus groups of white Southerners and a national telephone survey of 1216 randomly selected adults. Tom W. Smith, Director of the General Social Survey of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago further analyzed the data. The research was supported by a grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.*


**Now Available to the Public**

***Seeking an America as good as its promise***

**REMEDIES FOR RACIAL EQUALITY: The Public's Views**

DAVID GEIGER

**Order the Report**

To order copies of the full report "Seeking an America as Good as its Promise: Remedies for Racial Inequality: The Public's Views" ($12 each, plus $3 shipping and handling), or for more information about the work of the Southern Regional Council, email the SRC at info@southerncouncil.org or visit our websites: www.southerncouncil.org and www.unbrokencircle.org. Write to:

Southern Regional Council
133 Carnegie Way, N.W., Suite 900, Atlanta, Georgia 30303-1024, phone: (404) 522-8764, fax: (404) 522-8791, e-mail: info@southerncouncil.org


Americans rate "improving schools and education" as a top priority over any other issue. Fifty-nine percent said education was a "top priority" and another 28 percent said it was an "above average" priority (a total of 87 percent showing strong support for education). Seventy-nine percent of blacks and 56 percent of whites said education was a "top priority" (the highest for both groups). This top ranking on the SRC survey parallels a steady climb by education on the University of Chicago National Opinion Research Center's General Social Survey (GSS) from 6th and 5th place rankings in the 1970s.

People surveyed were asked to consider a variety of specific programs to reduce inequality in education. Even in the face of difficult trade-offs, large majorities, often more than seven out of ten, said they favored a host of specific educational remedies:

- Providing more scholarship aid to black (75 percent) and low-income (88 percent) college students;
- Providing tax breaks to low-income families for college tuition (84 percent);
- Expanding early education programs such as Head Start (82 percent);
- Equalizing per-pupil spending across public school district lines (88 percent); and
- Reserving college openings for black students *if not doing so* would mean black students would be badly underrepresented on campus (67 percent).

Support is evident for improving the educational opportunities at all levels for black students, from the 82 percent who support Head Start to the 75 percent who favor "providing more financial aid for black college students who maintain good grades."

College admissions policies were given particular attention in the study, which found that support for college admissions policies to aid black students gains considerably more ground when the implications of abandoning affirmative action are considered. While only 45 percent favored the idea of reserving college openings for black students, many changed their minds and gave the proposal majority support (67 percent), if not doing so would mean black students will be badly underrepresented on campus. The 52 percent who opposed reserving openings for black students in the questions mentioning dis-



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

crimination were asked if they would "still feel that way if it meant that black students who are likely to do well in college would be badly underrepresented among students." About 44 percent said "no" which means that after bringing up this consequence only 23 percent were still opposed to assisting black students in getting into college even if it led to black students being underrepresented. Respondents found combating discrimination and maintaining diversity about equally compelling as arguments for reserving college openings for black students. ■

# All Groups Rank Education High But Reasons Vary

Telephone survey respondents and focus group participants alike gave top priority to education. In a focus group in Raleigh, North Carolina, SRC pollsters asked the twelve participants which of three strategies – more jobs, increased political participation and representation, or more education – was the most effective way to reduce racial inequality. With unanimity, the group said education.

"Everything else depends on education," a white woman in Raleigh said. "If [the education blacks receive] goes down, then it will be whites who have higher incomes and blacks who have lower [standards of living]."

"You get the education, then you get the job opportunities," a man in the focus group said. "The issues go hand in hand. So [that means] you'll have more black executives and black-owned businesses [which means] more blacks in the workplace and more blacks in politics. If you have the education, you'll have everything else by default."

In a focus group in Gainesville, Georgia, a white man said, "Parents need to push their children in education. Lower class blacks are not pushing their children to become educated."

As this last comment demonstrates, just because whites cite education as the reason for racial income disparities does not necessarily mean whites are looking to structural explanations for poverty. Lack of education, itself, can be explained in terms of personal failings, such as lack of motivation or ability on either the parents' or the child's part.

Because Americans see education as so important, it is not surprising that they see a lack of education as a major reason why black Americans have lower incomes on average than whites. More whites (36 percent) "strongly agreed" that racial income inequality exists because blacks "don't have the education to rise out of poverty" than with any other explanation (discrimination, single-parent families, lack of motivation, welfare).

Blacks were more likely to "strongly favor" three other explanations: discrimination (60 percent); limited job opportunities (57 percent); and the effects of racism and segregation (55 percent).

How, then, do whites explain the supposed lack of education among blacks that they believe is causing inequality? Apparently, they do not explain it in terms of discrimination. A mere 9 percent of whites felt that blacks face a "great deal" of discrimination in getting a good education in the public schools and a mere 8 percent felt they face a "great deal" of discrimination in getting a good college education. Another 32 and 35 percent of whites saw "some" discrimination hurting blacks' chances to get a good public school and college education, respectively. But a majority of whites (55 percent in the case of public schools and 54 percent in the case of college) saw only a little or none at all. A quarter to almost a third of white respondents saw no discrimination at all in education.

Blacks had a completely different perspective. One-third believe blacks face a "great deal" of discrimination in getting a good education in the public schools and college. Another 41 and 44 percent saw "some" discrimination. Only a mere 4 and 9 percent saw "none at all."

Whites are much less likely to see discrimination in any sector of society than blacks, but they apparently see less in education than any other sector. While only 41 to 43 percent of whites see at least some discrimination in education, 81 percent believe blacks face at least some discrimination in an overall sense, 64 percent see at least some in buying or renting a home, 64 percent see at least some in getting elected to political office, and 60 percent see at least some in getting a good job or promoted.

Although these results suggest that whites see education as one of the least discriminatory sectors in society, nonetheless whites were more likely to support race-based remedies in education than they were in housing, business, or politics. People surveyed were also supportive of increased aid to black elementary and secondary students. Eighty-eight percent support the principle of equal funding, saying that states should "ensure that schools in black neighborhoods have as much to spend on educating each student as do schools in white neighborhoods, even if that means cutting spending or raising taxes." This was the only area of the survey where whites said they supported a race-conscious remedy over a class-based one (81 percent of whites favor equalizing school expenditures between low-income and wealthy schools).

# Schools in Conflict: A History Lesson

**By Leslie Dunbar**

The Supreme Court's school desegregation decision, announced May 17, 1954, had been too long coming. The South's political order, aided by the nation's indifference to the ideals the decision professed, was the cause of the ensuing bitterness. It is not clear that the decision is fully yet accepted.

It had been painfully arrived at. The five cases decided that day, answering the constitutional question of racial segregation, had been in litigation for years. As John Egerton has recounted in his book *Speak Now Against the Day*, a week before the *Brown* decision, SRC had convened a four day conference in Williamsburg, Virginia. There they discussed how the region should adjust to the expected decision which had been forecast when the Supreme Court had, after its 1953 hearing of the cases, set the cases down for re-argument on five questions it had posed, which seemed to point toward a ruling against continued permissibility of segregated schools.

A year before *Brown*, the Southern Regional Council, through its staff and friends, had a central role in the preparation of what came to be known as the "Ashmore Report." Harry Ashmore, then editor of the *Arkansas Gazette*, had been recruited by the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Advancement of Education to lead a large new, comprehensive look at the structure of "bi-racial education" in the South. Amazingly, in less than a year a huge survey with a considerable amount of field work carried out by a sizeable and specially recruited staff, was done, analyzed, and published—the day before the *Brown* decision (*The Negro in the Schools*, University of North Carolina Press). The entire work was coordinated by Philip Hammer, a close friend over the years of the Council's. One of the principal researchers was Guy Johnson, SRC's first Executive Director. Serving with Hammer on the five-person central staff were SRC's Harold Fleming, who did the final review of the material before Ashmore put his imprint on it, and two long-time Council members, John A. Griffin and Mozelle Hill. The book became the authoritative report on what "separate-but-equal" actually meant.

In that same year of 1954, SRC received a substantial grant from the Ford Foundation for the strengthening of SRC's state affiliates, the Councils on Human Relations. (It would be the last Ford Foundation money received by the Council—possibly the last received by any civil rights organization—for about a dozen years.) The Councils on Human Relations formed a network of membership-based advocacy groups whose small staffs engaged themselves more vigorously in the pulsating turmoil of those days. In some states—Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia come first to mind—they were at the forefront of public dissent from the repressive policies and actions of the state governments. Local Councils sprang up. In other states—Mississippi principally, with Louisiana not far behind—repression was so strong that establishing an active Council on Human Relations was all but impossible.

A succession of field directors—Fred Routh, Paul Rilling, Paul Anthony, and Ed Stanfield—brought SRC into direct participation alongside the state Councils in their local battles, and most of those had to do with compliance with the law of the land regarding schools.

SRC and the Human Relations Councils also were involved closely with the organizations that arose to work for peaceable school desegregation. Towards that end, they fought against real or threatened school closings with which the "massive resistance," led by Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, Governor Orval Faubus of Arkansas, and others, sought to blanket the South.

"Save our schools" groups appeared across the South. There was in Little Rock the Women's Emergency Committee to Open Our Schools, followed, as the crisis there receded, by the Women's Emergency Committee for Public Schools. The Virginia Committee for Public Schools organized originally to struggle against the threatened school closings in Arlington, Charlottesville, and Norfolk—threats that became real in the latter two cities—but later spread elsewhere in the state. Help Our Public Education (HOPE) carried the fight in Georgia. The Committee on Public Education (COPE) and Save Our Schools (SOS) confronted in New Orleans the hard segregation acts of the state legislature and the local Citizens Council. And women in Mississippi, bonded together as Mississippians for Public Education, in 1964 were largely responsible for the peaceable token desegregation of the schools of Jackson and Biloxi.

All of the above groups were predominantly composed of and led by women. The full story of the work for civil rights by Southern women—white and black—has yet to be written.

SRC was, directly and through its work with state and local Councils, closely and intimately involved with all these efforts. Paul Rilling, field director at the time, was constantly in New Orleans in the Summer of 1961, working with COPE and SOS. Paul Anthony was similarly engaged in the 1964 desegregation of Mississippi schools.

SRC's Leadership Project, led by Benjamin Muse, was

its other field program. Mr. Muse, journalist, farmer, one time Virginia legislator and gubernatorial candidate, tirelessly roamed the South, speaking with political and business leaders, editors, and other influential persons. His message was, "lead the way to peaceable integration." For a year or so, he was re-enforced in this advocacy by J.J. Brewbaker, retired superintendent of schools in Norfolk. Mr. Brewbaker had been superintendent there when the Commonwealth of Virginia forced the closing of his schools. He had had an experience that only a few others were unfortunate enough to undergo. He had retired in honor, and had a story to tell to other school leaders; that was his assignment.

In the first days of the Kennedy administration, Attorney General Robert Kennedy summoned a score or so of Southerners for a lunch discussion; three of them represented SRC. A practice that had begun even before the inauguration now picked up momentum. In part that was due to the fact that Harold Fleming, who had left SRC in March 1961, had created the Potomac Institute as a liaison between the concerns of the Civil Rights Movement and the federal government.

SRC was the private research center for the entire movement (not only regarding schools). The files grew daily as newspapers, magazines, and governmental and other reports were read, clipped, and filed. These files, housed today at the Auburn Avenue Research Library on African-American History and Culture in Atlanta, were open to any person who asked. The press regularly sought information and consultation by visit or phone call. So, too, did government people as well as workers in other organizations.

SRC poured out a stream of publications. Some were mimeographed, the so-called Special Reports. Beginning in the school year 1958-59, a background report on school desegregation came out annually for the next five years. The forty-six-page 1959-60 report carried a typical refrain: "the basic issue had become the defense of the public schools." The report concluded: "There is no reason to believe that this process has ended, or will be slowed."

Also mimeographed were "Leadership Reports," sent to a targeted list of business and key community leaders. In 1961-62, for example, they included the reprint of the address by a leading banker on the importance of law and order for securing outside capital investments, an outline of new school legislation in Georgia, and a new statement of the American Anthropological Association. By the time they ceased in 1964, forty-seven such "L Reports" had been published and distributed.

There were printed publications, too. In 1953, again in 1954, again in 1956, and once more in 1960, the Council published, in question and answer form, the pertinent facts about school desegregation. The 1960 report, for example, sub-titled "The First Six Years," began with question one: "What Did the Supreme Court rule in *Brown v. Topeka?*" and ended with question thirty: "What can we do in our communities to help effect harmonious social change?" Appended were the Supreme Court's opinions in the school desegregation cases, opinions in two other related cases, and suggested further readings for each of the thirty questions, and also for "longer reading." They were sent to a great many organizations and persons.

Occasionally, pamphlets were commissioned by outside scholars. J. Kenneth Morland of Randolph-Macon Woman's College wrote in 1963, under the joint imprint of the Council and the Anti-Defamation League, a widely read and cited pamphlet entitled *Token Desegregation and Beyond*. Emory University's Donald Ross Green and Warren E. Gauerke in 1959 were authors of a pamphlet, *If the Schools Are Closed: A Critical Analysis of the Private School Plan*.

SRC's own staff was busy, too. Muse wrote a book, *Virginia's Massive Resistance* in 1961 (Indiana University Press). Three years later, as a project of the Council, he wrote *Ten Years of Prelude: The Story of Integration Since the Supreme Court's 1954 Decision* (Viking Press).

And it was in the pages of *New South*, a forerunner of *Southern Changes*, that Robert Coles, who we then referred to as our "staff psychiatrist," published the first essay from his study of the effects on children of school desegregation. This was followed by a pamphlet in 1963, jointly published with the Anti-Defamation League, entitled: *The Desegregation of Southern Schools: A Psychiatric Study*. Dr. Coles had begun his now famous field studies in the South in 1961 under SRC's sponsorship. *New South* was used occasionally for special studies. Staige Blackford's "Free Choice and Tuition Grants in Five Southern States" took up virtually the whole of the April 1964 issue.

If the outcomes of the struggles are not all that we hoped for, we can rightfully believe and know that the hard fight was a good fight to have won, and that it created opportunities for SRC and others now to build on. A good education for all of the South's young people—let us not forget this—was not possible prior to 1954. Now it is ours to realize. ■

---

*Leslie Dunbar was executive director of the Southern Regional Council from 1961-1965. He lives in Durham, North Carolina.*

# Title I Reauthorization:
## Renew Federal Support to Under-Resourced Schools

By Dianne Piché

When Congress takes up the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) later this year, the stakes will be higher than ever for poor and minority children. Particularly for those children attending schools that receive support from Title I, the section of the law aiding under-resourced schools, the outcome of the looming Congressional debate could make a big difference whether those children have access to the resources they need to succeed in school.

With an appropriation now over $8 billion, Title I is by far the largest of the ESEA programs, providing supplemental funds to schools serving high concentrations of low-income children in order to assist students in meeting high academic standards. Congress is likely to consider an array of competing proposals, including:

- Whether to continue targeting Title I funds to high poverty schools and school districts as it does now;
- Whether to redirect some portion of Title I funds into private school vouchers;
- Whether to strip Title I of its original purpose to help poor children catch up through, for example, "block grants" to states; and
- Whether to link Title I funding to measures that have an adverse impact on many poor and minority students, such as policies that demand an end to so-called "social promotion" without effective intervention measures and severe punitive procedures for children who experience problems.

The last time Congress reauthorized Title I, in 1994, it did so under very different political circumstances, and it largely adopted the recommendations of a coalition of education and civil rights advocates, along with the Clinton Administration. The 1994 amendments sought to recast Title I from a remedial program in math and reading to a powerful tool to assist schools with high concentrations of poverty to educate students to the same high academic standards as schools in the suburbs and elsewhere. Title I now calls on states and school districts:

- To raise academic standards;
- To build the capacity of schools and teachers to teach to high standards;
- To develop and use fair and accurate assessments of students' attainment of the standards, to disaggregate assessment results by race, gender, income status, and other categories, and to refrain from using test results for purposes for which they have not been validated (e.g., for student placement or promotion decisions);
- To hold school officials accountable for results, by providing intensive help to low-achieving schools and corrective action when schools fail to improve after several years of help;
- To fully include limited English proficiency (LEP), disabled, homeless, and migrant children in Title I specifically and in the standards-based reforms in general, including a requirement that LEP students be assessed in their native language, or be provided with testing accommodations as appropriate.

An ongoing project of the the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights is monitoring implementation of the new Title I at the federal, state, district, and school levels, to determine whether and how key provisions of the new law designed to equalize learning opportunities for poor and minority students are actually being carried out.

### Reforms Sound and Workable

The Commission recently released a report on the first phase of this effort, assessing state plans for Title I compliance and federal enforcement. The Commission found that the new Title I reforms are sound and workable. While the reforms called for by the 1994 amendments are still in midstream, evidence of their impact is accumulating in states that had similar initiatives in effect prior to 1994 and in places that have acted rapidly to implement the 1994 reforms. In the South, and elsewhere across the country, examples of high-achieving, high-poverty, high-minority schools are helping to dispel harmful myths about race, class, and learning. For example, the Commission investigated two schools in Alabama that were identified as "Distinguished Title I Schools" by the Department of Education. These schools, Tuggle Elementary in Birmingham (100 percent African American and 90 percent low-income), and Adams Elementary (67 percent African American, 18 percent Latino and 92 percent low-income) in Gadsden, both are intensely focused on developing a sound foundation in reading and language arts in the early grades. At Tuggle, the entire staff received intensive training as early participants in the state-sponsored Alabama Reading Initiative and receives ongoing assistance from both the Alabama Department of Education and the University of Alabama. Approaches include the

use of Reading Recovery techniques and Effective Schools principles. Adams has developed a comprehensive schoolwide program to meet the needs of a diverse student body, which includes students with multiple disabilities and growing numbers of migrant and LEP students.

Title I funds are used to pay for resource teachers, curriculum materials in reading and other subjects, a certified teacher to work with LEP students, a summer program for migrant students, and a district staff member to analyze student achievement data in order to provide teachers with information on each student's strengths and weaknesses. Approaches used at Adams include SRA (Science Research Associates) Direct Instruction, a curricular approach designed to improve basic reading skills, supplemented by an innovative science curriculum (funded by the federal magnet schools assistance program).

On a district-wide basis, the Commission has been examining several urban school districts that have made impressive gains. For example:

- San Antonio and other cities in Texas have benefited from a number of statewide reforms that have produced gains and narrowed achievement gaps between African American and white and between Latino and white students. Statewide reforms have included a successful school finance lawsuit, and a statewide accountability system, which provides incentives to improve minority achievement. In addition, the San Antonio district used New American Schools design models such as *Roots and Wings* and *Expeditionary Learning*, along with sound professional development and bilingual efforts. The result: the number of low-performing schools has declined from forty to six over a five-year period.
- In Memphis, a system-wide effort to improve student achievement included new content standards, increased school-based authority, and increased accountability, as well as the introduction of school improvement programs such as *Roots and Wings* and *Accelerated Schools*. Schools that have been redesigned along lines contemplated by Title I, have produced substantial gains in achievement and the proportion of students taking college preparatory courses in math has increased substantially.

## States Range from Exemplary to Egregious

There is wide variance in the degree to which states have complied with the requirements of the new Title I, ranging from exemplary models to egregious violations of the law. Although most states reported they are taking steps to implement portions of the new law, there has been insufficient attention to key provisions designed to benefit or protect poor and minority children, particularly provisions designed to include LEP children and to hold schools accountable for the progress of *all* students. For example, many states consider schools to be making adequate progress, and thus take no corrective action, even when large numbers of students are still failing to achieve basic proficiency in reading and other subjects.

Failures by the U.S. Department of Education to take actions needed to implement and enforce the new Title I have retarded educational progress. The Clinton Administration has been steadfast in its support for public schools and efforts to direct more federal funds to poor areas. The Department of Education has taken positive action to further the purposes of the new Title I, including providing useful, though belated, guidance to the field and prodding states to adopt good procedures for identifying schools in need of improvement.

But, following the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, the Department shrank from furnishing clear messages to state and local education agencies on any issue that might prove controversial. As a result, many state and local education officials have received the impression that the new Title I is largely a deregulation law that will free them from bothersome federal conditions, and have failed to understand that the tradeoff in the law is higher standards and accountability for results. Most significantly, the Department has either failed to enforce or has misinterpreted key provisions of the law that are designed to equalize learning opportunities between poor and non-poor children. These include provisions for:

- High standards and accountability in all subjects, not just reading and math. Educators and advocates know that when subjects like science and social studies do not "count," they are often taught poorly in Title I schools.
- Statewide standards and assessments, to guard against the dual standards that prevail in many states, with higher standards in affluent suburban districts, and lower ones in poor urban districts.
- Local and school capacity. Few states have made the commitment needed to help low-income districts acquire the resources to improve teaching, increase learning time, and assist all students in achieving at high levels, as contemplated by the law.

Progress has been further retarded by additional failures of the U.S. Department of Education, including:

- The failure to ensure timely adoption of standards that meet the requirements of the law. As a result, as of the summer of 1998, thirty-four states and Puerto Rico still did not have performance standards for students or a process for developing them;
- The failure to provide the assistance and guidance needed to states to develop the accountability and corrective action measures needed to improve failing schools, including strategic intervention for students who need it. As a result, too many states have continued to condone

persistent low achievement, along with high retention and drop out rates in Title I schools.

- The failure to explain and enforce the statutory requirement that children be assessed in the language and form most likely to yield accurate information about their ability;
- The failure to insist on processes for assuring that children with disabilities will receive accommodations and will not be excluded from assessment except in rare circumstances;
- The failure to make clear to states and local education agencies that Title I assessments are not to be used for high stakes purposes;
- The failure to require states to measure separately the annual yearly progress of poor children and children with limited English proficiency so that the requirements of the law cannot be met solely by the gains of more advantaged children; and
- The failure to place sufficient emphasis on the importance of improving teaching through effective programs of professional development.

Cumulatively, these faults and misinterpretations have served to undermine a central objective of the new Title I: to eliminate the prevailing dual system of education that consigns poor children, children of color and children with special needs to schools and programs with lower expectations, fewer resources and fewer opportunities than those enjoyed by the great majority of advantaged children.

In criticizing the U. S. Department of Education, the Citizens' Commission does not suggest in any way that state and local officials have done their part to effectuate the purposes of the law. Many have not. Nor should Congress' role in holding back progress be under-emphasized.

Despite the shortcomings of the Department of Education in implementing the new Title I, there is every reason to believe that the program can be successful in the future. Since the process of reform contemplated is a long-term one, the five-year authorization period will expire before states have completed and implemented their reforms. But the experience of several states and cities in carrying out measures called for by Title I has already yielded positive results in the improved achievement of disadvantaged youngsters. Prospects for further gains will be enhanced by extending the 1994 reforms, increasing federal resources to improve teaching in high-poverty schools, and a commitment by the Clinton and subsequent administrations to implement the law, including a willingness to enforce its provisions where violations occur. ■

*Dianne M. Piché is a lawyer and writer specializing in civil rights and educational equity issues. She directs the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights' Title I Monitoring Project and is the principal author of the Commission report, "Title I in Midstream: The Fight to Improve Schools for Poor Kids." Portions of this article are reprinted with permission from that report and from an article which appeared in* Poverty and Race *(Nov/Dec 1998). For more information, or to order copies of the Commission's thirty-four page Title I report, please contact the Commission at 2000 M Street NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036, 202-659-5565, 202-223-5302 (fax), or e-mail dpiche@wltlaw.com.*

*The Citizens' Comission's most recent report,* The Test of our Progress: The Clinton Record on Civil Rights *is available at the Comission's address listed here. Orders may also be made by fax. The report is available at no cost to* Southern Changes *readers. It features five articles on affirmative action, judicial nominations, voting rights, and the census.*

## For more information concerning the reauthorization of Title I, please contact:

Amy Wilkins
The Education Trust
1725 K Street, NW #200
Washington, DC 20006
202-293-1217

Wade Henderson
The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
1629 K Street, N.W., Suite 1010
Washington, DC 20006
202-466-3311

Ambrosio Rodriguez
Mexican American Legal
Defense and Educational Fund
1518 K Street, NW, Suite 410
Washington, DC 20005
202-628-4074

Nancy Zirkin
American Association of University Women
1111 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
202-785-7700

# Standards Reform: Focus on Learning for All

**By M. Hayes Mizell**

During the past two decades, the South has emerged as the star graduate of the nation's remediation class. It ended up there after several centuries of making what a school counselor might euphemistically characterize as "bad decisions:" slavery, racial oppression, de jure segregation and massive resistance. But whether because of pathology or choice, the South had become rebellious and out of control. Striking the teacher was the last straw. It surprised no one when it flunked. Alone, down and out, with no money and no friends, it finally resorted to something it had avoided for centuries: learning. The more the South learned, and the more it used what it learned, the more self-confident it became. It discovered that skills have value, and folks who have money and want to make more money seek out skills. These skills, combined with the South's work ethic (it had never been afraid of hard work, it had just worked hard at the wrong things), made it prosperous and proud, embracing education almost as an article of faith.

Like any low-performing student who migrates into the ranks of achievers, the South's progress has been impressive because its efforts to improve education started so far behind more prosperous areas of the country. For most of this century, it struggled to provide even a semblance of public education, from a full school year, to decent facilities, to adequately trained teachers. The South denied—even these to children from low-income and African-American families, and, of course, to children with disabilities. Only in the 1970s did Southern states finally begin to provide inclusive public education systems similar to those elsewhere in the nation.

Now, just as the South is catching up to the nation, the dynamics of schooling are changing dramatically. The emphasis is increasingly on the results of education, what students actually know and can do, rather than on merely providing the components of the educational process. There continue to be concerns about the fairness of some states' education financing systems and the supply of qualified teachers, but most policy makers and taxpayers are more concerned about what students are learning. Are schools challenging and encouraging all students to master increasingly difficult subject matter? Are schools adequately preparing students for the next grade? Will students have the knowledge and skills to compete successfully in a global economy?

These concerns have caused most states, and some local school systems, to develop and mandate "standards." This term is political comfort food, meant to reassure an increasingly skeptical public that schools are just as rigorous, if not more so, than the schools that were attended by adults who are middle-aged or older.

In their current incarnation, however, standards are potentially much more important than in those alleged glorious days of yesteryear. An overly simple explanation of standards is that they define what students should know and be able to do, perhaps at each grade level, or at certain benchmark grades, such as four, eight, and twelve. Standards also define the level of proficiency that students must demonstrate in order to prove that they can perform at standard. In other words, a standard may state that a student must be able to explain the causes of the Civil War, but it also should describe how much knowledge the student must exhibit in order to satisfactorily meet the standard.

In theory, standards are powerful tools. They provide the means to know what students should be learning and to monitor whether students are getting the instruction and support they need to learn it. States are more likely to hold school systems accountable for ensuring that increasing proportions of students perform at standard. There is at least the potential for parents to understand specifically what schools expect students to learn, and to develop partnerships with teachers to make sure students are satisfactorily progressing towards the desired academic results of schooling. Most importantly, however, standards assume that nearly all students can meet high expectations for learning, though not at the same rate of progress, and for some not without considerable help and even multiple chances.

Many people are nervous about standards. Time and again education bureaucracies have demonstrated their expertise in screwing up a sound and promising concept. They have tied good ideas in so many knots of complexity that few people, particularly overburdened teachers, can understand or implement them effectively. Standards are often written either in pureed education-speak or so broadly that they provide little helpful direction to teachers and parents. Standards-setting bodies often go overboard and mandate too many standards, more than most teachers can address.

## Standards: A Majority-Culture Conspiracy?

Some people believe standards are part of the majority-culture conspiracy to set the "bar" of academic perfor-

mance so high that it will increase the failure and dropout rates among students of color and those from low-income families. There is no doubt that one purpose of standards is to prod all students to take their education more seriously, but standards should put just as much pressure on schools and teachers to perform at higher levels. Significantly greater numbers of students will not perform at standard unless schools and teachers become much more effective. If there is evidence that schools are using standards only to hold students accountable, then communities should be vocal in demanding school and teacher accountability for implementing reforms necessary for students meet the standards.

In spite of the risks of states, school systems, and schools abusing standards, evidence of their potential is beginning to emerge. Some school systems are using standards to stimulate broad reforms. A problem common to many schools is that teachers are relentless in assigning homework, but the assignments may have more to do with demonstrating the teachers' "rigor" than with increasing student learning. If one takes standards seriously, the purpose and quality of teachers' assignments become more important. Are the assignments primarily "make work" exercises, or are they developed specifically to help students progress towards performing at standard? The need for reform in this area would not likely arise in the absence of standards.

A related problem is that in awarding grades, many teachers give greater weight to students' "effort," or whether they handed in assignments on time, than to the quality of the students' work. Because of standards, from Boston to Long Beach, there is an increasing emphasis on the quality of how students demonstrate what they know and can do. In some classrooms, teachers and students even reach consensus on criteria for assessing student work. In these classes, students begin to think more critically about the quality of their work and become more willing to revise and improve their assignments to meet higher standards of performance.

The Corpus Christi, Texas, school system is using standards to raise expectations and performance across the district. Each year the school system sends a complete copy of its standards to every household with school-age children. A leadership team of teachers from across the district annually plans and leads a full day of standards-based staff development in which teachers share promising practices with their peers. This year Corpus Christi is using a new report card that informs parents which specific standards their children have met and which ones they have yet to meet. These and many other reform initiatives based on standards have yielded impressive results as student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills has improved significantly over time.

Unfortunately, the use of standards has also revealed that many teachers lack the knowledge and skills to help students progress towards performing at standard. There are, for example, mathematics and science teachers who did not major in these subjects in college and who are not secure in their knowledge of the content they are teaching. These teachers are the ones whose instruction is most dependent on textbooks and who lack the confidence to engage students creatively in learning. The Louisville, Kentucky, school system is trying to address this problem by supporting five full-time teacher "fellows" who provide one-on-one staff development for teachers in low-performing schools. In San Diego, California, each school principal now spends at least two hours each day in classrooms, working with teachers to improve instruction.

In many ways, the new focus on standards represents the culmination of the South's long educational journey. While there are inequities, for the most part the region provides the basics of adequately funded education systems, literate teachers, comfortable school facilities, technology, and a wide variety of ancillary supports. There will always be a need to improve on these basics, but it is unlikely that by themselves they will significantly increase student learning. What is now emerging in the South is a four-part debate over (a) what all students should learn, (b) how well they should learn it, (c) how to determine what they have learned and how well, and (d) how to support and hold accountable school systems, schools, and teachers to help students perform at standard. There will be those who resist efforts to improve their performance because to do so they will have to develop new attitudes and behaviors based on the belief that nearly all children can perform at standard. Overcoming these obstacles will not be easy, but at long last the focus is on the right thing, not just the conditions of education but the results of education. ■

*M. Hayes Mizell directs the Program for Student Achievement for the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. He was born in North Carolina. The Program for Student Achievement supports standards-based reform in San Diego and Long Beach, California; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Louisville, Kentucky; and Corpus Christi, Texas. For more information about the program, contact the Foundation at 212-551-9100.*

# Completing the Circle, Part II

"How can I get a copy of that wonderful civil rights documentary series produced by the Southern Regional Council that I heard on public radio?" The most frequently asked question among the fifteen hundred email messages to the "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" web site now has an answer.

After June 1, 1999, copies of the Peabody-award winning civil rights audio documentary series produced by George King for the SRC will be available on compact disc and cassette.

SRC's "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" tells the story of the Civil Rights Movement in five Southern cities: Little Rock, Arkansas; Jackson, Mississippi; Montgomery, Alabama; Atlanta, Georgia; and Columbia, South Carolina. Aired on more than 250 public radio stations in 1997 and 1998, the series brought hundreds of comments from listeners in more than thirty-five states from Alaska to Maine.

The CDs and cassettes are a "tremendous resource for teachers everywhere," said University of Illinois educator Judith Hartley. A curriculum guide with sample lesson plans and creative activities for students in middle, high school and college is being prepared to accompany the series.

### Music Licensing A Challenge

Arranging for rights to use the original music that is part of the oral histories has taken almost a year and half. Licensing requirements allow the music that enlivens the series to be played on public radio without any special arrangements with the artists. But to produce units for sale, even by a non-profit organization, requires licensing agreements with artists and publishers of the series.

The music gives this series incredible power. But the process of tracking down artists and music publishers was complicated because of the large number of songs excerpted in the series. Licensing guru Thom Watson, who located many of the close to 300 songs that enliven the series, searched through the Library of Congress and elsewhere to secure the rights.

Many people responded warmly to Watson's requests to license the songs at a reduced rate. "I talked with Ted White, who wrote 'Think,' sung by Aretha Franklin," said Watson, "and he was really encouraging right off the bat. When he got the booklet, he said, 'This looks like it's an absolutely wonderful project. I'm the father of a teen, and I think it is vital that this information is available to all new generations to make sure the truth is not forgotten. I wish you all the best of luck.'"

Watson attempted to license about thirty-three tunes from MCA Records, including "People Get Ready" by Curtis Mayfield and the Impressions, The Andrews Sisters' version of "Straighten Up and Fly Right," and John Coltrane's "A Love Supreme." "I had sent the request in but hadn't heard anything from MCA representative Kelly Martinez," said Watson. "When she called, she told me that she and a friend had been driving to northern California. Her friend listens to public radio and they happened to hear the series on the air. 'I told my friend,' said Martinez. 'This is the request that I got from that guy in Atlanta; we have to hurry and get back so I can work on that guy's request.'"

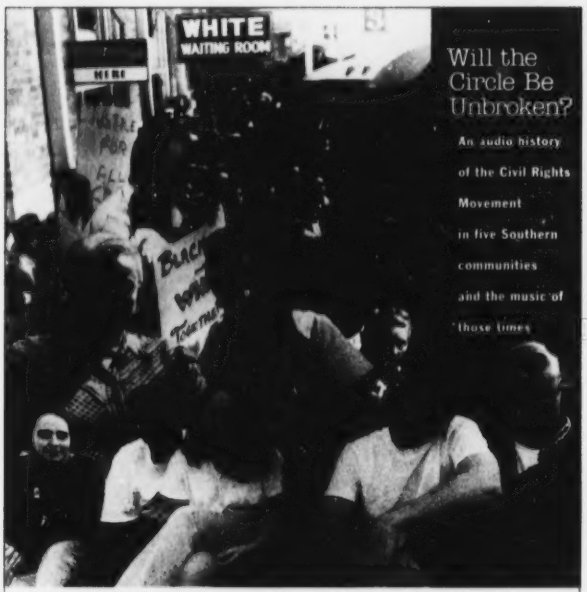
Dealing with 189 different entities to license the rights wasn't always easy, said Watson, but it was not without quite a few perks. "It was just an interesting feeling to talk to a lot of the artists and agents."

A number of artists, recording companies and music publishers were generous and encouraging. "Warner Special Products gave us twenty-three classic rock and roll tunes gratis," said Watson. "'You can use my song "For What its Worth" free of charge,' said legendary recording producer Brian Stone.

"I sent all the information to Rudy Simons whose publishing company co-represents such classic standards as "All of Me." He wrote back immediately. He said 'I will not accept any charge whatsoever for this.' He was a civil rights activist back in the 60s. 'Look out for me,' he said, 'I am still involved in civil rights and I will be coming to Columbus for the School of the Americas protest next week.'"

Some of the songs are by obscure artists who were hard to find. "'There's Something On Your Mind'" was originally released on the Fire label in 1960," said Watson. "There is no such label anymore. So, you go to the next step, which is getting in touch with some well-known recording company, like Rhino records or Warner Special Products or Collectables Records. They issue a lot of oldies and retrospectives. I called each of those, and finally Warner Brothers said, 'You need to get in touch with Collectables.' Collectables said, 'We do not license that song, but we will research it for you and find out who does.'"

"Collectables showed records identifying the administrator of the recording as a gentleman by the name of Bobby Robinson," Watson continued, "so I started writing him and calling him to no avail. We were just about to eliminate that song from the program and then out of the blue, I got a call from him, a good thirteen months later. And he said, 'I no longer administer that song, but I know who does. It is Arista Records.' With producer George


WHITE
WAITING ROOM
Will the Circle Be Unbroken?
An audio history of the Civil Rights Movement in five Southern communities and the music of those times

**"This is the best way—short of time travel—to experience the Civil Rights Movement. When you enter the Circle you become part of American history—through the voices and experiences of the people who made it."**
**Julian Bond,** historian, president NAACP

For more information, call 404 522-8764 or visit www.unbrokencircle.org

☐ I would like to order the 26-episode set (13 hours) of **"Will the Circle Be Unbroken?"**
☐ Please send me additional information about the Southern Regional Council.

Please ship to:

name

street, PO Box

city state/province postal code country

e-mail

| | quantity ordered | | | item total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CD sets (13 discs) | ____ | @ | $150.00 | $ ____ |
| Cassettes (9 cassettes) | ____ | @ | $136.00 | $ ____ |
| Teacher's study guide (available September 1, 1999) | ____ | @ | $20.00 | $ ____ |
| | | | Sub-total | $ ____ |
| | | | Georgia residents add 7% sales tax | $ ____ |
| | | | Shipping and handling | $ 10.00 |
| | | | Total amount | $ ____ |

☐ Bill my credit card: ☐ Master Card ☐ Visa

name as it appears on your card

card number expiration date

☐ Check enclosed. (make checks payable to The Southern Regional Council)

Mail this order form to:
**"Will the Circle Be Unbroken?"**
Southern Regional Council
133 Carnegie Way, Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30303-1024

Major funding for this project was provided by
The National Endowment for the Humanities, The Ford Foundation, and
The Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Thanks also to Atlanta Public Schools, and Coca-Cola

King in the sound studio literally doing the final re-mix of the shows, an urgent request was sent to Arista records and the recording was cleared for reduced-fee use.

## Circle on Tour

Producer George King has visited a number of cities in response to interest in the series. King was hosted by the National Oral History Association in Buffalo, New York, and the Southern Oral History Association, which met at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia in 1998.

"I would say there was a great deal of enthusiasm from the audiences," said King, "People were very moved by the content and the authenticity of the voices."

At Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, King found many avid listeners with comments and questions. "They put together a reception for us," said King. "I was talking to somebody who I found out was (Michael) Schwerner's brother, who is teaching there now." Michael Schwerner was a civil rights worker who was murdered with James Chaney and Andrew Goodman in Philadelphia, Mississippi, in 1964. "I remember telling him that we actually have some testimony from his mother in the show," said King. "We also used a little piece from James Chaney's younger brother, recorded at the time, talking about the experience."

King worked for most of the 1990s, interviewing civil rights veterans—both known and unknown—and producing the radio version. The process of collecting the oral histories, however, began even earlier in the late 70s, with an idea from Randall Williams and Hilda Dent, of Montgomery, Alabama. Executive Producer Steve Suitts found backers of the project at the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the Ford Foundation. Williams and folklorist Worth Long also interviewed many of the movement activists.

"We were doing these oral histories originally because we did not want to lose these voices," said King. "Of course, subsequently we have lost many more, Virginia Durr being the most recent example. Others, like Aaron Henry of Clarksdale, Mississippi, are not around any more."

King spent countless more hours in the studio, re-editing the series for the CD and cassette version. He even recorded some original music, solos and short transitional pieces with local Atlanta artists, bassist Brett Hartley, keyboardist Rob Grable, oboeist Deborah Workman, and Tom Wolf on harmonica. King, who plays occasionally with the Expand Band, filled in on percussion.

You can reserve a copy of the series now by calling or writing the Southern Regional Council at (404) 522-8764, 133 Carnegie Way, Suite 900, Atlanta, GA 30303-1024 or visiting the series' web site at www.unbrokencircle.org. ■



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# RESOURCES

This brief collection covers thirty books, reports, articles, and other materials that illuminate current education issues.

## I. Relevant Reports and Background Information on School Reform

**The Education Trust.** ***Education Watch: The 1996 State and National Data Book*** and ***The Community Data Guide,*** Washington, DC, 1996. The data book is a succinct summary of student achievement, in the United States and in each state. National test data show a widening gap between white and minority students. Other data document that school systems serving a high proportion of low-income and minority students have fewer resources, less well-prepared teachers, and far less challenging curricula.

**Education Week.** ***Quality Counts: A Report Card on the Condition of Public Education in the 50 States,*** Washington, DC, January 1997. Funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, narrative and charts provide data on standards and assessments, quality of teaching, school climate, allocation of resources, and student achievement.

**Marzano, Robert J. and John S. Kendall.** ***A Comprehensive Guide to Designing Standards-Based Districts, Schools, and Classrooms,*** Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA, 1996. Answers to essential questions are provided about standards-based reform, including guidelines for curriculum and instruction, examples of assignments and scoring guides for assessment, suggestions for tracking progress, and advice about reporting on student achievement.

**Mathews, David.** ***Is There a Public for Public Schools?,*** Kettering Foundation Press, Dayton, OH, 1996. This short report draws on extensive polling data and research to portray the troubled relationship between communities, the larger public, and public schools, and other practical advice to strenghten those relationships.

**Oakes, Jeannie, Amy Stuart Wells and Associates.** ***Beyond the Technicalities of School Reform: Policy Lessons from Detracking Schools,*** UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, Los Angeles, CA 1996. This monograph examines 10 schools that have "detracked" and provides research and analysis about the effects of grouping students into rigid, hierarchical tracks.

**Poplin, Mary and Joseph Weers.** ***Voices from the Inside: A Report on Schooling from Inside the Classroom,*** Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, CA 1993. Drawing on eighteen months of interviews of teachers, students, parents, custodians, support staff, and administrators in four school communities, the authors identify key problems in schooling: poor human relationships and failed understandings; race, culture, and class conflicts and differences; values and the need to discuss "really important things;" more challenging teaching and learning; saftey issues; depresssing physical environment; and hopelessness.

**Public Agenda Foundation.** ***Divided Within, Besieged Without: The Politics of Education in Four American School Districts*** (1993) and ***First Things First: What Americans Expect from the Public Schools*** (1994), New York, N.Y. In order to "shed light on the inner workings of education reform," the Public Agenda Foundation conducted 200 lengthy interviews of educators and parents involved in four diverse school districts. *Divided Within* found that good-faith efforts at reform eventually bogged down in turf wars. The authors discovered that "There is a critical need for a different kind of political process, one that allows the general interest of communities to prevail over the narrow interests that currently predominate."

Other barriers to school reform were revealed in the more than 1,100 interviews conducted for *First Things First*. The public is most concerned about safety, order, and learning basic skills; but a majority are uncomfortable with changes that make classrooms too different from their own education. The public does want change.

**Wheelock, Anne.** ***Safe to be Smart: Building a Culture for Standards-Based Reform in the Middle Grades,*** National Middle School Association, 1998. This text describes some of the strategies middle grades educators use to institute and strengthen standards in their schools. It includes methods to establish school cultures that balance achievement with connectedness and community.

## II. Research on School Reform

**Elmore, Richard F. "Getting to Scale with Good Educational Practice,"** *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 77, No. 1., 1996. Drawing from past reform efforts, this article addresses the question of how good educational practice can move beyond "pockets of excellence"

ANNOUNCING THE FIRST TWO BOOKS IN THE JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN SERIES IN AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

Edited by Waldo E. Martin Jr. & Patricia Sullivan, this series publishes pathbreaking books informed by several disciplines to illuminate America's multicultural past and the ways in which this past has informed the nation's democratic experiment.

THE COLOR OF THE LAW
Race, Violence, and Justice in the Post-World War II South
GAIL WILLIAMS O'BRIEN
"A historical page-turner. . . . Should quickly earn a secure place as a classic on race relations in the modern South. O'Brien has much to tell us about why the World War II era was a watershed in southern history. She also shines light on the continuing legacy of legal and extralegal racism in contemporary America. Savor this book!" —W. Fitzhugh Brundage, editor of *Under Sentence of Death*
352 pp., 23 illus. $45 cl / $18.95 pa

BROADCASTING FREEDOM
Radio, War, and the Politics of Race, 1938–1948
BARBARA DIANNE SAVAGE
"A powerful, eloquent testament to the men and women who took to the airwaves to fight racism at home, this book will change the way we think about World War II, the role of mass culture in the civil rights movement, and the tortured relationship between black folk and the federal government." —Robin D. G. Kelley, author of *Race Rebels*
Approx. 416 pp. $45 cl / $18.95 pa

AT BOOKSTORES OR BY TOLL-FREE ORDER
The University of North Carolina Press
PHONE [800] 848.6224 • FAX [800] 272.6817
CHAPEL HILL • www.uncpress.unc.edu

to reach a greater proportion of parents and educators.

**Lein, Laura, Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., and Mary Ragland. "Successful Texas Schoolwide Programs: Research Study Results,"** Charles A. Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin, February 1997. This study examines twenty-six schools in Texas with a high percentage of low-income students (over 60 percent qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch), which were implementing Title I schoolwide programs, and showed high academic performance (at least 70 percent passed the math section of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)).

**Southern Regional Education Board.** ***Education's Weak Link: Student Performance in the Middle Grades,*** March 1998; ***Raising the Bar in the Middle Grades: Readiness for Success,*** June 1998; ***Improving Teaching in the Middle Grades: Higher Standards for Students Aren't Enough,*** December 1998. SREB has published three of a series of four reports that examine the current condition of middle grades education in the 15 states that comprise the region it serves. To order a copy, call 404-875-9211 or visit their website at: www.sreb.org.

## III. Research and Information on Parent Involvement

**Burch, Patricia and Ameetha Palanki with Don Davies.** ***From Clients to Partners: Four Case Studies of Collaboration and Family Involvement in the Development of School-linked Service.*** [Report No. 29], Johns Hopkins University, Center on Families, Communities, Schools & Children's Learning, Baltimore, MD, 1995. Four local projects are developing collaboration among education, health, and other service providers and are empowering families as equal partners.

**California Tomorrow.** ***The Schools We Need Now: How Parents, Families and Communities Can Change Schools,*** Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA, 1997. This handbook explains the key issues in school reform using clear language aimed at parents and citizens. Checklists on school and classroom practices provide guidance for parents; profiles of schools in progress illustrate how reforms are carried out; and data charts make a strong case for addressing inequities. The report is available in Spanish and English.

**The Edward W. Hazen Foundation. "Investing in our Children: Advocacy and Organizing for School Reform,"** a report from the Conference of Grantees, New York City, October 1995. The proceedings of this meeting of grantee organizations, which work with low-income parents to engage them and communities in school re-


BEST COPY AVAILABLE

form, identified several critical issues: inequities in funding and resources; a tendency to react to problems rather than being proactive; an inability to reach and teach diverse families and children; and the failure to believe among some administrators that all children can learn.

**Henderson, Anne.** ***A New Generation of Evidence: The Family is Critical to Student Achievement,*** Center for Law and Education, Washington, DC, 1994. This annotated bibliography summarizes 66 studies that document the positive effects of family involvement in education on student achievement, and on schools.

**Epstein, Joyce L.,** ***School and Family Partnerships,*** [Report No. 6] Johns Hopkins University, Center on Families, Communities, Schools & Children's Learning, Baltimore, Md, 1992. This report examines the progress made over the last decade in the involvement of parents in schools, including how family environments influence family involvement in schools, how school environments influence family involvement, and the effects of school-family partnerships on parents, students, and teachers in elementary, middle, and high schools.

**Hoover-Dempsey, Kathleen, and Howard M. Sandler. "Why Do Parents Become Involved in Their Children's Education?"** ***Review of Educational Research,*** Spring 1997, Vol. 67, No. 1, pp. 3-42. This study examines psychological theory to explore why parents become involved. Three factors appear to be key: parents' perception of their proper role in education; parents' sense of their own efficacy; and the invitations, demands and opportunities for involvement.

**Policy Studies Associates.** ***Overcoming Barriers to Family Involvement in Title I Schools,*** prepared for the Office Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, Washington DC, February, 1997. Using data from federal surveys of 810 Title I elementary and middle schools and 20,800 children and their parents, as well as parent focus groups, and a survey of state education agencies, the study identifies major barriers to involving families, and successful approaches to promoting family involvement.

**RMC Research Corporation.** ***Parent and Community Involvement in Education,*** U.S. Department of Education, Contract RP 91-172008, Washington, DC, 1997. This study emphasizes parent, family, and community involvement in the middle grades through case studies of nine sites.

**U.S. Department of Education.** ***Strong Families, Strong Schools,*** Washington, DC, 1994. This review of research makes the case for business, government, and community support of greater parent involvement.

## IV. Useful Tools

**Bamber, Christina, Nancy Berla, and Anne Henderson.** ***Learning From Others: Good Programs and Successful Campaigns,*** Center for Law and Education, Washington, DC, 1996. This notebook describes about seventy programs that successfully engage families in improving student outcomes.

**Davies, Don, Tony Wagner, Nancy Sconyers, and Associates.** ***Policy Portfolio,*** Johns Hopkins University, Center on Families, Communities, Schools & Children's Learning, Baltimore, MD, 1996. The policy portfolio encourages schools and parents to fashion new ways of thinking about about the shared responsibilities for children. A key component is the recognition of the central role of the child as a participant in school and family partnerships. ■

*The resources listed here were excerpted from the appendix of a paper entitled "Parent Advocacy and Community Engagement in Education Reform—What Is Happening?" published for the Open Society Institute in October 1997 by the Center for Law and Education in Washington, D.C.*


Southern Regional Council
**Analytical & Research Services**

**Redistricting Plans**
*Voting Rights Act Compliant Plans for: Governments, Schools, Judicial Systems, Annexations, Deannexations*
**Precinct Realignments & Mapping**
**Custom Geodemographic Studies**
**Thematic Maps & Reports**
*Color Plots to 34" x 44"*
**Voting Behavior Analysis**

**For Seasoned Expertise**
**at non-profit rates please call:**
**(404) 522-8764**
or visit our website
**www. southerncouncil.org**





BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# Calendar

**April 23-25**

Labor Notes will host its 10th annual conference in Detroit, MI. The theme of the conference will be "Democracy is Power: Building Labor from Below" and will include workshops on cutting globalization down to size and social movement unionism. Speakers will include Baldemar Velasquez of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, Saladin Mohammed of Black Workers for Justice, and Maria Martinez of Teamsters for a Democratic Union, among others. For more information, call (313) 842-6262.

**April 23-25**

NOW (National Organization of Women) will host its Lesbian Rights Summit, a feminist strategy session, in Washington, DC. Discussions will include political strategies, coalition-building, skills sharing, and breaking the barriers that splinter our movement. The summit will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Capitol Hill. For more information, call (202) 331-0066 or visit: www.now.org/issues/lgbi/events/summit99

**May 6-8**

The NAACP will commemorate the 45th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* by hosting the Daisy Bates Educational Summit in New Orleans, LA. For more information, contact Rhonda Boozer at (410) 486-9133.

**June 4-5**

Fisk University will host its 32nd annual Race Relations Institute in Nashville, TN. The Institute is the only organization at a historically black university devoted to the study and discussion of race in America. The extensive list of speakers and panelists includes: Rep. John Conyers, Dr. John Hope Franklin, Will Campbell, Lee Mun Wah, James Earl Jones, and Dick Gregory. For more information, call Ray Winbush at (615) 329-8806 or visit: www.fiskrri.org/home/.

**July 10-15**

The NAACP will host its 90th annual conference in New York, NY at the New York Hilton Hotel and Towers. The Conference will include workshops, job fairs, youth leadership meetings, and a gospel extravaganza. For more information, call the NAACP Events Planning Office at (410) 358-8900.

## Save This Date!
## Lillian Smith Book Awards
## Saturday, November 6, 1999

The Southern Regional Council will hold the 21st annual Lillian Smith Book Awards ceremony on Saturday, November 6. The awards will be presented at a noon luncheon held at the Colony Square Sheraton Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. The ceremony will include discussions with and book signings by the authors. Since 1968, the Lillian Smith Book Awards have honored works of serious literary, artistic, or scholarly merit that enlarge public understanding of the diverse human experience in the South and illuminate the reform spirit of Lillian Smith and the progressive values of the Southern Regional Council.

# "Grace and Guts" Virginia Foster Durr 1903-1999

SRC Life Fellow Virginia Durr—born August 6, 1903— died February 24, 1999, in her sleep in a nursing home in Pennsylvania. She was one of the most outspoken white Southern progressives of the twentieth century and, though she never held elective office or any high position, one of its most influential. The wife of Clifford J. Durr and the sister-in-law of Hugo Black, she was the friend and confidante of Eleanor Roosevelt, Septima Clark, Rosa Parks, Myles Horton, E. D. Nixon, Martin Luther King, Jr., and many, many others.

A Birmingham native, she attended Wellesley College, and after marrying Clifford Durr moved with him in 1933 to Washington to work in the New Deal. There she fought the poll tax and began her association with the Southern Conference on Human Welfare and the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, the forerunner of the Southern Regional Council.

ROB AMBERG

*Virginia Durr, Alabama native and life long civil rights advocate.*

In the late forties, she worked in the Henry Wallace campaign and challenged McCarthyism. The Durrs moved to Montgomery, her husband's home, in 1951, and she served as his legal secretary. Their work brought them into contact and friendship with E. D. Nixon, the Pullman porter who led the Montgomery NAACP, and NAACP secretary Rosa Parks, whom Virginia Durr employed part-time as a seamstress and encouraged to attend a civil rights training session at the Highlander Folk School.

Charges of communism still shadowed the Durrs and in 1954 Virginia Durr was called before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, where she was famously photographed on the witness stand powdering her nose rather than answering questions.

When Rosa Parks was arrested in 1955, Nixon called the Durrs to help get her out of jail. As the Montgomery Bus Boycott developed, Clifford Durr gave legal advice to NAACP attorney Fred Gray on the cases which dismantled local bus segregation, and Virginia Durr became increasingly identified with the emerging civil rights movement.

Through the 1960s, the Durrs ran a household that overflowed with their own children and also journalists, historians, lawyers, and activists drawn to Montgomery by the bus boycott, the 1961 Freedom Rides, the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery march, and the many other local battles of the burgeoning movement.

Meanwhile, their affiliation with the SRC deepened. Clifford Durr was a Council Member, and Virginia Durr was writing, under the by-lines of Eliza Heard or Virginia Foster, for the SRC journal *New South*. In one of her articles, she covered the trial in Hayneville, Alabama, of the killers of Viola Liuzzo.

In the late sixties, the Durrs moved to a family farm near Wetumpka, Alabama, where they were locally known as "those communists on the Tallassee highway." The hordes of visitors continued to fill their home for conversation and debate about politics, law, and history.

Clifford Durr died in 1975 but in the late 1970s and into the 1980s, Virginia Durr continued to write, speak, and agitate for progressive politics. She published a widely praised memoir, *Outside the Magic Circle*, in 1985. In honoring her at the 1984 SRC annual meeting, then-executive director Steve Suitts said, "She's a woman who combines grace and guts."

In the eighties, she began summering at the Martha's Vineyard vacation home of her daughter and son-in-law, Lucy and Sheldon Hackney. There she renewed older friendships and charmed a new generation of admirers. Her ninetieth birthday party on the island was attended by a thousand guests, including Hillary and Bill Clinton.

She remained in remarkably good health until the past few years, when she moved from her home into full-time nursing care.

Her funeral in Montgomery was attended by the present Governor of Alabama, a stark reminder of how she had endured and to a large extent prevailed over her political foes.

---

*H. Randall Williams is editor at Black Belt Press in Montgomery and a contributing editor to* Southern Changes.

# *Join the Council. Get Southern Changes* Free.

If you are not an associate member of the Southern Regional Council, join now. Mail your check with the coupon below or let us bill you.

**Join the Southern Regional Council as an Associate Member and receive *Southern Changes* free.** You will also receive invitations to conferences and discounts on special reports. Your $30 contribution ($75 for institutions) helps support the work of the Council.

☐ My Check Is Enclosed ☐ Bill Me

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Clip and mail to Southern Regional Council, 133 Carnegie Way, Suite 900, Atlanta, GA 30303-1024


**SOUTHERN CHANGES**

**Volume 21, Number 1, Spring 1999**

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL
133 Carnegie Way, Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30303-1024

97

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Montgomery, AL
Permit No. 497



ERIC PROCESSING & REFERENCE FACILITY
Acquisitions Librarian
1100 West St Fl 2
Laurel MD 20707-3587

BEST COPY AVAILABLE